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Reds Bring  
Reaction

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W. J. CHENT

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# THE REDS BRING REACTION

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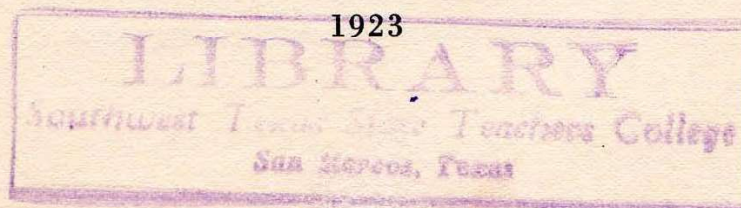
BY W. J. GHENT

PRINCETON

PRINCETON UNIVERSITY PRESS: LONDON: HUMPHREY MILFORD

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS

1923



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:THE:PRINCETON:UNIVERSITY:PRESS:PRINCETON:U:S:A:

## PREFACE

THAT economy of the reader's effort which Herbert Spencer counsels the writer ever to keep in mind, will be best served by first fixing a point of view. The field scanned is a broad one, where rages a confused conflict; and the combatants, though they seem to range themselves (and *do* on all the ultimate tests) into one or the other of two main camps, are grouped into many factions, constantly shifting their ground, fighting with passionate bitterness at cross-purposes, and shouting slogans which take on different meanings with every turn of events. The words of our supposedly common tongue have significance according to where, and when, and by whom, they are used. The terms "liberty," "democracy," "social justice," can not mean to most people what they mean to a defender of Bolshevism. We shall see later on that in an historic case the phrase "revolutionary implications of the mass strike," which to the minds of its framers and users proclaimed armed insurrection, was held to be merely an innocent display of turgid rhetoric. What any one means by any of these terms depends on where he is or has been in the struggle, what he has seen of it (if anything) at close hand, and how much of it he understands. Thus there is need of ample and varied store of prolegomena. And therefore this preface—which will run far, which will in fact be a chapter in itself, which will traverse "both matter, form and style;" but which will, I think, justify its length by fulfilling the Spencerian injunction and making plainer what follows.

Some of this matter has already appeared in print, mainly in *The Weekly Review*, now *The Independent*. Though sen-

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tences and even paragraphs here and there remain unaltered, the parts have been rearranged and almost wholly rewritten, and much new matter has been added. I take it that according to the unwritten code one may use the things of one's own mintage thuswise: once (perhaps twice) in conversation, once in a periodical, and once again in a book. Some thrifty souls there are who go far beyond this usage; and they have, I know, the sanction of the Autocrat of the Breakfast Table. Repeat, he said in effect, and keep on repeating. I have heard of a living writer who once, some years ago, framed a pithy and pretty saying about the stupidity, ignorance and venality of Congressmen; and this saying, I am led to believe both by my own researches and by others' testimony, he has since repeated in book reviews, essays, editorials, editorial paragraphs, sketches, dramatic critiques, philological dissertations and may even have fashioned in rhyme. I feel that there is self-indulgence here to the point of excess, and that even the good Dr. Holmes would have drawn the line somewhat to leeward.

This book is a commentary on the present reaction. "Reversion" or "regression" would be the better word—for what is meant is the swingback, the return, on the one hand, of a considerable element of society to states of mind and methods of social warfare once wholly discredited; and on the other hand, of another element of society, determined to place itself more securely in power. "Reaction," however, has the commoner and broader usage; and it has the advantage that the thing which it names (though imperfectly) may be personified as a conscious power, willing and carrying on a certain course of action. This reaction is thus of two kinds—that of the extreme radicals, the Reaction of the Left, which rejects the lessons and standards of civilization and turns back to fanaticism, Jesuitry and physical force; and that of the ex-

treme conservatives, the Reaction of the Right, which makes occasion of a period of social upheaval to regain its former privileges and to recover its lost ground.

Both of these wings reject democracy—the one in favor of a dictatorship of fanatics, the other in favor of an oligarchy of wealth. The Left promises to restore democracy in some future imagined millennium, but only after all the disaffected have been starved or bayonnetted into submission; while the Right, making no promise for the future, proposes only to extract the substance of democracy, leaving the form for a popular plaything. Though both wings profess to serve the cause of mankind, the one seeks an actual slavery, the other a thinly disguised serfdom. Apparent foes, they work together against society as a whole; but the winnings, whatever they are, go wholly to the Right.

Chiefly the book deals with the Left, because in that at the moment lies the greater danger. The danger is not so much in what it openly threatens, for indeed much of this phenomenon is mere theatricism and charlatanry, supported by the lavish gifts of men and women of wealth. This danger, of course, is not to be slighted. To ridicule the bombast and pretense in which it expresses itself is one thing; to pooh-pooh its existence is quite another. The revolutionary Communist, for all his stage-play, is a fanatic and a firebrand. So long as society insists upon keeping on hand such stores of inflammable material in the form of large sections of the working class steeped in privation and misery, it must expect, from time to time, what follows from the touch of flame to tinder. But the chief danger lies in the fact that the tumult and shouting of the Left inevitably strengthens the Reaction of the Right.

The seeming exception is Russia, wherein, under conditions unique in history, a band of merciless fanatics usurped the



supreme power and have since, by the secret tribunal and the firing squad, maintained their sway. They succeeded; but they have brought their own country to famine and ruin, and they have fortified capitalist reaction throughout the world. When the Left threatens, the Right arms; and the people willingly grant it exceptional powers for the common defense. Even when, as now in these United States, this Left is mainly a small aggregation of factionaries and adventurers (including a few police spies), given to burlesque antics, sounding phrases and thrasonical threats, the result is the same. The Right makes no distinctions in the matter between the real and the pretentious. Both serve it equally well. Though it chuckles in its sleeve like a Roman soothsayer, it calls, in the name of the high gods, on society to defend itself, and the response is adequate and immediate. The tragi-comedy is as old as history, but never has it been so artistically presented, with such skillful mummers and such perfect stage accessories, as during these last four years.

The Great War was no more tragic an outcome to the hopes awakened by the orderly progress of social democracy than is this shattering of the confident expectations of a new order engendered during the war's last year. The worst is that as yet there is small sign of promise. That any of these voluble revolutionaries can believe in the possibility of the violent overturn which he predicts for these United States seems incredible, so lacking is any slightest indication of fulfilment. Yet indubitably some of them *do* believe it; and some others, to whom revolutionism is adventure, or notoriety, or sex, or a meal-ticket, profess to believe it; and these join hands and mingle voices and constitute themselves (with certain additions from the Department of Justice and the local detective bureaus) the vanguard of the revolution. The near-Left, that sorry thing

which misnames itself Liberalism, but which is an utter negation of most of what historic Liberalism has stood for, helps them along with smooth words and canting phrases: and that section of the wealthy who care for this kind of thing as a form of amusement or excitement, tender their contributions. So the thing flourishes, and so the Right battles against it, and social progress is checked, and the circle is perpetually renewed.

Nowhere is this reaction more evident, and nowhere are its manifestations more deplorable, than with this element of radical intellectuals, pseudo-Liberals, and others, all pro-Bolshevists, here lumped together as the near-Left. For these are the present-day teachers who in the name of liberty and justice put forth a propaganda which might well cause one to regard the much-abused Jesuit as a person cruelly maligned. We had great teachers a generation ago; and we thought that through them we had settled a few things in this highly uncertain world; and one of these was that vicious means in behalf of a desired end were not to be tolerated. Certainly the Gloomy Dean is right: the spacious times of great Victoria bred *men*, and we may not look upon their like for many years. Our good Earth Mother will travail long before she brings forth another Huxley, with his saving gospel of common sense and common honesty. In after-days men will look back upon this epidemic of pro-Bolshevism as men now look back upon Salem witchcraft, and will wonder how it could have arisen or developed, and they will find no answer. They will marvel that men who professed to speak for democracy and liberty and civilization could have found excuses for the violation of the most primal rights of men—excuses for usurpation, tyranny, repression and cruelty. They will marvel that men could for a period have reverted to the infantilism which says



that what is right for me is wrong for you. "I can imagine," writes Mr. Simeon Strunsky in reply to some of the hyperboles of Mr. G. Lowes Dickinson on the menace of secret diplomats, "any number of things that are a greater menace. I believe that a greater menace than secret diplomacy is the perfectly open human insistence that what is wrong for the other fellow is right for me; that what is wrong in the Czar is right in Lenin; that what is wrong in the old is right in the young; that what is false and distorted in the conservative is truth and straightforwardness in the radical."<sup>1</sup> It is worse yet that so much of this propaganda of ethical dualism is not open; that it is furtive and cowardly, that it will not candidly express itself, but that instead it seeks its end by equivocation. If there could be, all things considered, a propaganda more destructive to the movement for social progress I cannot imagine what that would be. It is helpful only to the Reaction of the Right.

This tide of conservative reaction reached its most violent stage some time in 1919; its farthest height and sweep in November, 1920. A slight ebb has followed; but as a people we are pretty much where we were two years ago. In certain circles of insurgency there has been much hallooing over the results of the elections of 1922. A study of these results, however, gives small warrant for this exultation. The pendulum has swung, as biennially it is wont to do; one of the chief parties has lost strength, and consequently the other has gained. But the amazing phenomenon is shown, throughout a large part of the country, of progressive and standpatter elected by exactly the same votes. A Governor wins on one platform and a majority of the Legislature on an opposing one. A Senator, mildly progressive, of one party is elected, and so is a

<sup>1</sup> *New York Evening Post*, April 22, 1922.

solid delegation of standpat Representatives. Such contradictions are general; never, it would appear, have votes been so confusedly thrown about. The undug potatoes and unhailed grain of the Northwest translated themselves into ballots against the dominant section of the party in power. Kukluxism, prohibition and a dozen other secondary issues, local or general, combined in the registering of an undetermined result. Yet out of it all has emerged by chance a group of seven new Senators (six of them elected and one appointed) each with some part of a social program. That is something; and let no one disparage this fragment of a victory. But it is not the sweeping triumph one reads of in the insurgent press. Conservative reaction still keeps the saddle.

The argument for a reconstructed order is for the moment lost, since there are so few who care to listen. Most of those who are not partisans either of the Right or of the Left are indifferent to social issues and concerned only with gain or enjoyment. With others, especially among the most exploited, there is dissatisfaction, resentment, unrest; and there comes from them a vague clamor against ill conditions. But they know not where to turn or what to do, and they are, for the time, skeptical of schemes and systems. There might be—and one may wonder why there is not—a strong Liberal or Progressive movement, animated by high purposes and guided by the sense of a more or less definite goal to be reached, able to organize this unrest into an effective demand for social justice. But the chaos of counsels has so far made all attempts in that direction futile. The one organized movement already in the field, the Socialist Party of America, which might have pointed a way, and which might, with some measure of success, have combatted both these reactions, was itself caught in a reactionary tide which swept it first into Germanism,



then into anti-Americanism, and later into Bolshevism; and though now, repudiated by both the Bolsheviks of Russia and the Bolsheviks of America, it has again turned somewhat toward its earlier policies, its power and its influence have been irretrievably lost. It has left a sorry record, which can never be expunged and never explained away.

To that movement, in its better days, I contributed my services—disinterestedly, as I believe, and as I think my onetime comrades will cheerfully concede. Out of a loyalty that shrank from the thought of separation I kept to the party longer than I should have done; for from the beginning of the great struggle I saw clearly enough the drift toward what followed. The result of the party referendum on preparedness in the winter of 1915-16 ought to have decided me; yet still the old tie proved strong; and in the vain hope that the drift would be checked I stayed on. Further and plainer evidences of the swelling tide of *furor Teutonicus* in the party followed. I saw the outcome. Before America entered the war I was done.

But though I long ago repudiated the party, I see no reason for repudiating the principles I then professed. The convictions born of a lifelong experience in the working-class movement can not be overthrown by the recreancy of a group or party. What I then meant by Socialism I now mean; and what I then believed about Socialism I still believe. Those with whom I then associated used the same terms as I; through conference and controversy we tested them over and over again, and we meant by them the same things. If now and then there were differences, they were but Carlylean instances of "except in opinion not disagreeing." The regression is theirs, not mine; they are the real apostates. I found no difficulty, once I understood them, in accepting the fundamental dogmas. One may accept a dogma for use, as a pragma-

tist takes up an hypothesis; or one may, with the fanatic, seize it for abuse. The theory of the class struggle, that bugbear of so many social-minded persons, seemed to be valid, when rightly understood, as it still seems. And yet the abuse of that theory might well set the world in flames.<sup>1</sup>

The cause of Socialism is still my cause. To that cause I have given what I had to give, and have taken—not cheerfully, I confess, but without clamor—the penalty. Those opulent revolutionaries, radicals and Liberals of the Left (and what scores of them there are!) who know so well how, while denouncing the capitalist system, to extract from it such ample income, move me to wonder. In the more legitimate modes of income-getting they have all the advantage. In the literary world the Reds and the near-Reds climb to points of vantage where the collectivist of sober coloring can not hope to follow. Thus intrenched, and acting in zealous unison (so long as the matter is one of common interest), they are able to say what book shall be showered with praise, what condemned and what ignored. In the editorial offices and the publishing houses they sit at the receipt of manuscripts and say to this, "Be thou published!" and to that, "Be thou damned!" In the service of the great journals—often conspicuously reactionary ones—they post o'er land and ocean in ease and luxurious comfort. In all this they have things pretty much their own way; and their occasional denunciations of the capitalist system must

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Maurice William, in a recent book, "The Social Interpretation of History," which deserves a wide reading, deals with this subject impressively. With much of the work I am in cordial agreement—particularly with that part which treats of the abuse of this theory by the Socialist Party of America. I am in less agreement (though open to conviction) with that part which censures the arousing of class consciousness. It has always seemed to me that a class which *sincerely identifies its own interests with the interests of all mankind* (the phrase, I think, is Labriola's) will be unlikely to go wrong, to plunge into anti-social actions, to take on the savage morality of a mediæval peasants' revolt or of a Bolshevik conspiracy.



therefore be taken somewhat as a ritual of group technique as well as an expression of inner feeling.

As they have all the advantage in the more legitimate means, they have, in the more questionable ones, a stark monopoly. The more extreme the revolutionist, the more emancipated he is from those little superstitions, survivals of a past age, which lead to self-imposed limitations—which cause one to regard certain gainful activities as inconsistent with loyalty to a social ideal. To the emancipated, numberless are the ways of getting on; and what is good for oneself must necessarily be good for the cause. Many are the modes of bilking the insurgent boobery, that unfailing reservoir of treasures richer than those of Ormus and of Ind and all the rest of the exhaustless East. And then there is Mr. Hearst.<sup>1</sup> The broad and well-beaten pathway leading from the tents of the radical intelligentsia to Mr. Hearst's payroll has welcome and manna at the end; and the most highly recompensed and most warmly welcomed are those who in past times have most vocally, and for

<sup>1</sup> It will be just as well to put this matter more bluntly. Mr. Hearst may be either, as some regard him, the noble, zealous and disinterested tribune of the people, or according to others, the diabolist, the enemy of society, the corrupter of men's souls. In the nature of things he can hardly be both. One who honestly holds the former view may of course honestly write or edit for Mr. Hearst for pay. What is here dealt with is a wholly different matter. We have had, for the last dozen years or so, a group of paladins of civic virtue, rather noisy indeed in their professions, who stood as the special guardians of society against the machinations of Mr. Hearst. To them Mr. Hearst was everything he ought not to be, and they published him to the four quarters of the world as a monster. And then suddenly some of them, at fat salaries, took editorial jobs under Mr. Hearst, and some others, at fat prices for their wares, began publishing their writings in Mr. Hearst's newspapers and periodicals. Ten years ago, when the radical movement had ideals and standards, such a shift of position would have been termed an instance of impudent and cynical venality, or something like that, and the doers would have been permanently discredited. Today, such is the morass into which the Bolshevized radical movement has sunk, that the act prompts not even an unfavorable comment. That what is profit for oneself must necessarily be profit for the "cause," is the accepted morality; and to glean while the gleaning is good, is the current rule of action.

the longest periods, denounced Mr. Hearst as the sum of all things evil. Mr. Hearst, I take it, has small humor, but a pretty wit—a wit that expresses itself not in words but in picturesque effects. And certainly one must travel far to find anything more picturesque than one of the long-time assailants of Mr. Hearst placed high in the hierarchy of his forces. "The anti-monopolists come easiest," said Commodore Vanderbilt. Not so the anti-Hearstians. They come high: for they know they can get the price.

I am one of those who believe that this sorely tried race of men could have Socialism, or whatever "ism" accords with its nature and its interests—and that in a reasonably short time. Perhaps that order would be Socialism (as I firmly believe), perhaps some other. What blocks the way to social reconstruction is not, in the last analysis, the conservative or the reactionary of the Right. An orderly movement, based upon truth, reason and common sense, would sweep this obstacle away, and march forward triumphantly; and though now and then it would halt, from flagging energy, due to the deadweight and the inertia of the mass, these rests and breathing spaces would but serve to store up fresh energy for new advances. What really thwarts the movement, what brings disintegration, disillusion, hopelessness, is the fanatic, the emotional lunatic, the adventurer, the social Jesuit. It is they that divide the movement and at the same time strengthen the opposition. This was what Horace Greeley saw at the end of his long service to community Socialism; one gets much the same mournful verdict from Thomas Wentworth Higginson—not a radical, but a sincere reformer and a true man; and one finds it in the twilight reflection of every veteran who looks back over the toilsome years in which he has served the cause.

For Socialism (or Sociocracy, or whatever we are to have)



is, in its best sense, Adjustment. It is the fitting of economic relations to the needs, the capacities and the nature of men. It calls for study and thought, for careful experimentation, for scientific judgment. Above all, it calls for unselfish service. *The moods, the natures, the temperaments, the mental equipment of the revolutionaries and their near-Left allies, are in all respects the antithesis of what Socialism demands, and the participation of these beings in any Socialist experiment would be fatal to its success.* The man who can organize a workshop for the most efficient production is more truly the herald of the future society than the man who can merely frame a revolutionary catch-phrase; and the underpaid and little known expert in a government bureau who makes his career the eradication of a crop pest does more for humankind than the denouncer of capitalism. Even the turbulent I. W. W.s, after seventeen years of futile wandering and shouting in the wilderness, have begun to understand a part of this truth; for in a recent convention, though holding fast to their phrases, they decided that the most necessary thing for the present is for each worker to learn the technique of his industry, and accordingly they ordered the preparation of a series of informational handbooks.

The Red, with his near kin, is the perpetual hinderer and disorganizer of the social movement. In the main he is an egoist, and his business is self-expression. If he is sincere, he is a fanatic: the advancement of the race and the expression of his ego are mutual processes, and nothing can prove to him that one is ever inconsistent with the other. If he is not sincere, he is of course untroubled with the need for justifications. In any case his temperament is largely histrionic; he must always act a part. When he learns from Moscow that he must "engage in illegal activities," he means to play the role, no mat-

ter to what absurd antics it carries him. What to do with him is the problem. A Lincoln could, with a few shrewd observations, make him ridiculous before the world. But we have no Lincolns left, and the problem remains. Government repression does not eliminate him; a certain amount of repression he invites and enjoys. Occasionally, by playing too near the danger line, he gets caught in the toils; but in that case he merely exchanges the thrill of daring adventure for the ecstasy of a not too arduous martyrdom. Nor, on the other hand, would complete legal tolerance eliminate him; his pleasant, showy and usually profitable role is not to be abandoned because it ceases to be dangerous. But, in fact, the role would be attended by greater danger. To wipe out the law against him would be to turn him over to the untender ministrations of society, which has rough and ready ways of dealing with what it regards as intolerable annoyances. The law against him is a more considerate friend than he imagines. Yet something, somehow, must be done; for what this sad old world most needs is a practicable means of ridding itself of the Red and his company of social obstructors.

*Los Angeles, California*  
*December, 1922*

W. J. G.



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## CHAPTER I

### THE ARMISTICE AND AFTER

#### PART ONE

THERE was never in the United States a more propitious time for the institution of far-reaching social reforms than that immediately following the armistice. America had entered the war professedly "to make the world safe for democracy." Her participation had resulted in an overwhelming victory. Everywhere, except among the extreme reactionaries of both Right and Left, the confident belief was held that the old world, with its bitter evils, had fallen asunder, and that a new world of social justice was to be ushered in. "The back of the profit system is broken," wrote Mr. William Allen White in September, 1918. "Capital is permanently hamstrung. The new world has abandoned much of the fundamental doctrine upon which the passing world was founded." In the same month Mr. Charles M. Schwab declared that the old aristocracies of birth and wealth had gone; that nothing now counted except service to one's fellowmen, and that in but a short time there would be "no sharp distinctions between rich and poor." No one expressed this belief more strongly than President Wilson. In a letter written some months earlier, read to a gathering at Newark on March 20 of the same year, he said:

"Every sign of these terrible days of war and revolutionary change, when economic and social forces are being released upon the world whose effect no political seer dare venture to conjure, bids us search our hearts through and through and make them ready for the birth of a new day—a day, we hope and



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believe, of greater opportunity and greater prosperity for the average mass of struggling men and women, and of greater safety and opportunity for children."

Even the extreme radicals, though they scoffed at what they called the delusions of the moment, prophesied a new epoch. It was to come, they said, not in the ordinary course of events, not by a bourgeois reconstruction, but by a proletarian revolution. By one means or another, according to the general belief, fundamental changes were soon to be wrought.

The talk of a revolution was of course fatuous. But for the widespread confidence in a great social advance there was ample basis. Never before had a state pushed so far the principle of social control. The Government had seized the merchant marine, the railroads, the telegraphs and the cables. It had extended its authority to the coal mines, the spruce forests, the grain fields, the elevators and the grist mills; it had created elaborate machinery for keeping peace in the basic industries between capital and labor and for obtaining the maximum production. Organized labor, the only part of labor which is articulate and which can be dealt with as an entity, had shown its strong loyalty throughout the war, and with good reason expected marked concessions in its demands for better wages and conditions. A victorious democracy, such was the prevalent view, could do nothing else than move steadily forward.

Yet nothing came in fulfilment of these confident expectations. The revolution predicted by the radical extremists oozed out in rhetoric and stage-play. A year later found most of the embryo Lenins and Trotskys, each of whom had looked upon himself as a possible dictator of the proletariat, in jail or on their personally conducted tours abroad, and their American dupes or abettors having a hard time with the law. Nor did

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the peacefully evolved new order make any better headway. If, as Mr. White had said, "capital is permanently hamstrung," the fact but shows that this lively creature is able to get along well enough without its tendons of Achilles. If, as Mr. Schwab had prophesied, only a short time would be needed to wipe out all "sharp distinctions between rich and poor," the reckoning would seem to be not that of the calendar, but of a geologist. And if the President's exhortation to all of us, some months earlier, to "search our hearts through and through and make them ready for the birth of a new day," is to be followed, the rite would appear to demand an extended period of spiritual preparation and of watchful waiting. The new day not only failed to appear, but even at this later time shows no sail in the offing.

## PART TWO

WHAT really happened was something very different. Within a year after the armistice we were in the midst of a tide of reaction which threatened to sweep away every social achievement gained during not only the war, but the two previous decades. By that time or a bit later the whole fabric of social control had been rent and unravelled. The telegraphs and cables had gone back to their former owners; the railroads, too, with enormous bonuses. The elaborate machinery for the settlement of labor disputes was being scrapped; and just enough of it was being maintained to penalize labor, as in the case of the coal mine strike (of 1919), while exempting capital. Price control was abandoned, profiteering became rampant; and everything was being returned to the status in which it stood



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at some time before the war. In greater or less degree the process has continued.

Co-incident was the drive against so-called radicalism. This drive, begun against outright sedition and the threat of revolutionary violence, came day by day to include a wider sweep of objectives. It aimed at free speech, free assemblage and a free press, trade-unionism, the collective bargain, particular methods of democracy such as the initiative, the referendum and the recall—and indeed most of what had been gained in a twenty-years struggle. Revolutionist and reformer, Bolshevik and progressive, anarchist and trade-unionist were lumped together for equal denunciation. Societies of national scope took up the propaganda. One of these, announcing its purpose to fight every theory that, in its judgment, “controverted American principles,” aimed its first stroke at that useful and honored body, the American Association for Labor Legislation. This association was assailed on the ground that it carried on a propaganda for health insurance, a “wholly un-American proposal,” and “a million volunteers” were called for “to fight un-Americanism wherever it appears.” Deportations, mob violence inspired from above, raids upon meeting places and newspaper offices, the expulsion of the Socialists from the New York Legislature, the appointment of the Lusk Committee, State laws against syndicalism—all these phenomena showed conservative reaction at its wonted game of taking full advantage of an opportunity.

The campaign overreached itself, and its more extravagant manifestations have ceased. But the movement remains, and so does the spirit which animated it. What it was at its peak is a thing not to be forgotten—a thing to be remembered as a warning for future times. Though the Left specializes in fanaticism and cruelty, it has no monopoly on these savage

#### THE ARMISTICE AND AFTER 5

traits; they know no class or group, and are at the bidding of any element determined to call them forth. What many of these crusaders of the Right thought and said three years ago; what others of them thought and did not care to say, and what unquestionably many of them still think, was impressively summed up in an editorial published in the *Seattle Business Chronicle* and reproduced as a display advertisement a few days later (Nov. 18, 1919) in the *Tacoma Ledger* and the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*. Its most striking paragraph is the following:

“We must smash every un-American and anti-American organization in the land. We must put to death the leaders of this gigantic conspiracy of murder, pillage and revolution. We must imprison for life all its aiders and abettors of native birth. We must deport all aliens. The Non-Partisan League, the so-called Triple Alliance in the State of Washington, the pro-German Socialists, the closed-shop unions, the agitators, malcontents, anarchists, Syndicalists, revolutionists, traitors, the whole motley crew of Bolsheviks and near-Bolsheviks must be outlawed by public opinion and hunted down and hounded until driven beyond the horizon of civic decency. The administration at Washington has made a mess alike of the affairs of the world and the affairs of the American people. It is simple truth to state that the Federal Government in the hands of the present administration is responsible in greater degree than any other single agency for the present chaotic and menacing condition.”

It is easy enough at this time to deny that three years ago any considerable body of American citizens could have shared in sentiments so debased. Yet if men's memories were not so short they would find in these words, when scanned again, a typical expression of the temper of the conservative extremists at that time—and an expression no less of the temper of a large part of the general citizenship. The Reaction of the



Right had conquered: it ruled, moreover, as it still rules, not by usurpation, but by a franchise from the people. It found, as it always finds, an easy task in persuading the people that it is not the worst evil in the world—that, in certain crises, it is a refuge against an intolerable menace.

### PART THREE

ANY propagandist of the Left can tell you the causes of the great transformation. That is, he can tell you all except the one proximate and dominant cause—for this, by reason of his closeness to it, escaped his notice. The real cause was the outburst of revolutionism, inspired first by Germanophile opposition to the war and later by infatuation for the régime of the Bolsheviks—an outburst that during the nine months following the armistice reached the proportions of an emotional epidemic. It was this which enabled the reactionaries of the Right to seize all the vantage points and steadily to consolidate their position. It enabled them to identify social and political criticism with sedition; the pettiest reform with the extremist overturn; direct legislation with direct action; the nationalization of railways with the nationalization of women; reformer and reconstructionist with the enemies of society. Mere wartime sedition could have been, to the reactionaries of the Right, of only partial and transient benefit. It is Leninism that put the game in their hands; for Leninism, with its violation of the most primal rights of human beings, is an evil that comes directly "home to men's business and bosoms." All except the fanatic and the sentimentalist can see and understand what it threatens. Even the downmost man, embittered

by privation, may regard it with scarcely less dread than does the comfortable bourgeois. Every gratulant utterance of the Socialist, radical and pseudo-Liberal press in behalf of this thing; every palliation or defense of Bolshevik tyranny, brigandage and persecution, served to increase the popular apprehension; and the Right, sharp-eyed and resourceful, has reaped the advantage.

Through no power of their own, through no skill in maneuvering, no measure of press control possible to them, could the reactionaries of the Right have come unaided to their present position. The public in recent years had been anything but charitably disposed toward the seekers of privilege and the obstructors of democratic progress. The current of legislation had long been driving against their aims and interests. The vast majority of the votes cast in the Presidential election of 1912 was specifically and aggressively against them. Though the meaning of the election of 1916 is a puzzle no man can ever read, there was at least nothing in the results to indicate a subsidence of this general feeling. Only by generous aid from its opponents could capitalist reaction have come so completely into its own. Without doubt there were contributory causes. The muddling of the Wilson Administration in a score of vital matters, by lowering the morale of the people and weakening its faith, had aided in the consummation; and the prolonged wrangle over the peace treaty had added something more. But all this might have happened with no disastrous effect on the general situation. Bolshevism turned the scale.



## PART FOUR

REVOLUTIONISM had been at work before, but except in spots it had caused no great alarm. For two decades after the Hay-market affair what there was of it kept reasonably quiet. But in the third year of the I. W. W. (1907-8), due to imports of doctrine from the French Syndicalists, it began to revive, and by 1910 it was flourishing. It had an added stimulus, though an unexplainable one, from the Lawrence strike in the early part of 1912. Yet though the I. W. W. constantly preached the doctrine that in a class war all means are justifiable and though it promised the overthrow of the state and the capitalist system, there was no panic. Here and there, when this organization became a nuisance, by reason of its "free-speech fights" and its attempts to put its doctrine of sabotage into effect, the local public struck back and struck hard. There was, however, no general feeling that society was in danger. The party Socialists were alarmed, and so were the trade-unionists, for the I. W. W. was exerting itself mightily to break up their organizations. But the great mass of citizens went their way serenely.

Even this brand of revolutionism had declined greatly in energy and noise by the time of the outbreak of the war. In the days between August 1, 1914, and April 6, 1917, though there was plenty of militant pro-Germanism, as well as plenty of the sort of militant pacifism that threatened all kinds of dire things in case America joined the Allies, there was little of what could rightly be called revolutionism. So, also, though sedition of a kind was common, there was little of real revolutionism during the seven months following. With the Bolshevik uprising in November—the overturn of a government of one set of Socialists by another set—the revolutionary revival

began. Here at last was a group, professedly working-class, with an extreme program, that had seized the state and established the dictatorship of the proletariat. What had happened in Russia could also happen in the United States, and the hour for action had come. Not yet, however; for in the United States the war was still on, and the hand of the law fell heavily upon those whose revolutionism became too exuberant. For another year they must watch and wait.

The Communist Propaganda League of Chicago, from which most of the later organized revolutionism traces its descent, was organized four days before the armistice. It was a thing farcical enough in itself, but the event serves as a mark in the first stages of an epidemic. Among insurgents generally the contagion spread rapidly. Individuals and groups vied with one another in their rush to the Left. New groups were formed—groups of Communists, Left Communists, extreme-Left Communists, super-Communists, and beyond-Communists—which evolved, one after one, in a sequence of rapid mutations. Insurgency clamored for the wildest kind of propaganda, and there was no lack in the supply. New papers were established to express the new ideas, and the pinkest of the established organs took on rapidly deepening shades of red. By the first of December, 1918, the whole body of insurgent journals, from the extremest to the most moderate, were united in their defense of Leninism, and they framed their news to fit their partisanship. The Department of Justice, with fostering care, helped the movement along, and Bedlam was let loose to have its fling.

Primarily this movement was Communist—not of the studio or parlor kind, but the active kind, much given to organization, secession and reorganization and the framing and disseminating of revolutionary phrases. Its auxiliaries, however,



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were many and various. Though the I. W. W., scornful of "Communist politicians" and somewhat subdued by the prosecutions of 1918, kept apart and went its own way, it acclaimed the Bolshevik revolution and all other professedly working-class revolutions and maintained an equally ardent propaganda. The Socialist Labor party, that most isolated and insulated revolutionary body in America, though keeping its own course, also added to the fervent chorus of praise of Bolshevik Russia and the justification of the proletarian dictatorship. The Socialist party, which in its un-Bolshevized days was always first to condemn any propaganda which even implied the use of armed force in behalf of the revolution, swung over to Bolshevism, though with qualifications. Striving by elastic formulas, and by new definitions of such words as "democracy" and "dictatorship," to hold to its ranks both the radical extremists and the moderates, it failed utterly; and though it continued this policy even after September, 1919, when most of these extremists seceded, it was brought to a full stop through the laying down by Lenin of the famous 21 points. Compelled either to modify its revolutionism or to take part in illegal and revolutionary activities, it decided, after long deliberation and violent controversy, in favor of discretion, and was accordingly excommunicated by Moscow. Since then, under the formula of a happy compromise by which it favors Bolshevism for Russia but rejects Bolshevism for America, it has swung back somewhat toward its former position.

To these groups came many accessions from that variegated and heterogeneous element, the Super-Radicals, composed of utopians, visionaries, sentimentalists, semi-Socialists, pseudo-anarchists, "radical democrats," "radical intellectuals" (especially the more vocal and obtrusive variety known

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as "young")—in a word, zealots of the moment, some of them all of these things at once, and the others, though never anything very long, most intensely that thing while the ferment lasts. To these straining souls Bolshevism revealed itself as quite the most wonderful and thrilling event that had ever happened. They all helped to swell the chorus.

### PART FIVE

YET all this, though awakening alarm and resentment, would have failed of itself to arouse the reaction that followed. The shouting of revolutionary phrases by professional revolutionists is commonly taken as a matter of course; and the ecstatic repetition of these phrases by emotional flappers is also taken as an evil that cannot be helped and must be endured. Obviously less of it is tolerated in a time of national stress, like that of 1919, than in normal times; one who knew the radical movement in 1912 will remember that words could be spoken and deeds done in that year which could not be repeated seven years later. What brought this outburst to the proportions of an intolerable menace was the aid and incitement furnished by the so-called Liberal journals of opinion. In former days, Liberalism and Socialism, whatever else they advocated, stood always, and with no Jesuitical qualifications, for democracy and humanitarianism. The highbrow organs of these social faiths now came forward as the apologists for tyranny, repression, robbery and cruelty, so long as such means contributed to a desired end. When in the fall of 1918 even the more moderate of these journals flopped over to Bolshevism, the response from the insurgent element was immediate. Their



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circulations rapidly increased. One of them, from a weekly issue of 11,000 (confined mostly to the universities) lifted itself in a short time to the 50,000 class. A rival journal did almost as well. The news stands in many places were piled high with copies, and there were no "returns." The new readers were, in the main, persons who had never before heard of these journals. The word had gone round that the authentic gospel of revolt was now to be found in these journals of the highest intellectual respectability.

The insurgent boobery bit, and bit hard. Moreover, the editors of the rough-stuff papers, knowing a good thing when they saw it, drew heavily on the new sources for copy, and reprinted, generally with appropriate credit, what they found most useful. One who followed the special organs of extremist propaganda during the climax of this epidemic could not but have been impressed with the number of columns credited to the highbrow journals of the metropolis. One who still follows them will still be so impressed, though from a number of causes the borrowing is now less copious. Nor can one deny that the matter has always fitted well in its new setting. It may have been more pretentiously written, more sanctimoniously, or even more daringly and violently written, than the home-made stuff of the revolutionist editor, but in point of view and in general adaptability to the needs of revolutionism it has harmonized admirably with the surrounding text. The readers of the stuff on its original appearance may have understood it one way; to the revolutionist editor who copies it in quantities it means what *he* means, and what his readers want it to mean. Those sophisticated persons who, in defense of the pseudo-Liberal press, draw subtle distinctions between the Bolshevism in these journals and the Bolshevism in the rough-stuff revolutionist papers, are sufficiently answered by the fact that so

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much of the material did, and still does, duty for both. Highbrow or lowbrow, far or near, the stuff is in substance of a kind. Its effect on the cloistered professor or on the naive seeker of "culture" may be different from its effect on the perspicacious "sab cat" or on his ecstatic ally, the parlor Bolshevik. But it differs little in essentials.

Thus to the other phases of the reaction was added this swingback of the professed exponents of Truth, Justice, Humanitarianism—this reversion to Jesuitry, to tortuosity in phrase-making, to double speech and double dealing, to the justification of discredited means for the greater glory of a cause. Though all sections of radical insurgency join in this Jesuitry, it is the nimbler wits of the Left-Liberal intellectuals who can best express it and who are thus enabled to set the fashion. The Communists employ their talents to best advantage in the development and reiteration of the revolutionary phrase; and the revolutionary phrase attains its greatest triumph in denouncing the capitalist (or the rival revolutionist) and in proclaiming exactly what is to happen on the Great Day. The art of apologetics for tyranny, repression and cruelty is best cultivated by the Left-Liberal intellectuals; and it is to these that the outspoken revolutionaries must turn for the most skilfully framed excuses and defenses of the Bolshevik régime. These are the social Jesuits; and they have shown that the zealot priests of a secular cult can far outdo anything charged against the fanatic priests of a supernatural faith. Should anyone quarrel with my use of the words "Jesuit" and "Jesuitry" as terms opprobrious to what such a one respects or reveres, I reply that I take the words as I find them. Whether or not the great teachers of the Society of Jesus did or did not hold doctrine that gives just warrant for the usage is a matter into which I cannot enter. The



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controversy is voluminous and of long standing, and my readings in it have been inadequate. I take the words as I find them; and those who have a quarrel to pick must carry that quarrel back of me to the generations of men who have fixed this usage.

This is the darkest phase of the reaction, the most disastrous and the most hopeless of cure. The others—capitalist aggression on the one hand and revolutionary violence on the other hand—are objective realities, which can be apprehended, and met and fought. But this is a subtler, more pervasive, more degenerative thing, a thing harder to fight. And never before in the world was there such a regression. Very likely there have been times when men gave themselves with equal or greater assiduity to the justification of evil means; but there has been no instance wherein the practise was so complete a reversion from that of the times preceding. That remote savage in whose brain first dawned the thought that the act deemed evil when done by another would also be evil if done by himself, was, in a sense, the founder of civilization. Doubtless, for his discovery, he was soon dispatched; but before yielding up the ghost he was able to convince some others, and from these the new concept spread to widening circles through the long generations. In every age have arisen groups and sects of fanatics, religious and secular, who have contested this truth. But in spite of them it won its way, and by reason of its acceptance mankind had ever advanced to new heights. It came, in recent times, to a universal acceptance among civilized men; and up to the middle of the year 1914 no one caring for his reputation would have disputed it.

Then came the great débâcle. The tearing up of a "scrap of paper," the invasion of a neutral nation, the necessity of "hacking one's way through," and the frightful atrocities

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that followed, gave Jesuitry a new life; and in that renaissance it was brought to these shores, where it flourished. We had pro-Germans and militant pacifists, who, in the need of defending their own attitudes, found increasing use for it; and then came Bolshevism, and the epidemic which followed. And so we have had a growing necessity for its employment and its development to cover up, in the name of liberty, democracy and justice, a multitude of savage acts.

There are still a few men among the social extremists who speak the well-established truth in the old words with the old meanings. Unhappily there are none of them in America. The most eminent of these men is Romain Rolland. Though a Communist, he has not forgotten the standards of civilization and the lessons of history. Asked his attitude toward life, he replies: "With the proletariat every time it respects truth and humanity. Against the proletariat every time it violates truth and humanity." Most pertinent to the matter in hand is his treatment of the relation of means to ends in the following recent statement:

"It was in this spirit that I wrote in 'Clerambault' (and I hold to the opinion now more than ever): 'It is not true that the end justifies the means. The means are still far more important to the true progress of humanity than the ends.' And this is due to the fact that the end (so rarely and always so incompletely attained) modifies only the external relations among men, whereas the means shape the mind of man either according to the rhythm of justice or according to the rhythm of violence. And if it is according to the latter, no form of government will ever be able to prevent the oppression of the weak by the strong. That is why I regard it as essential to defend the moral values, and to defend them even more, perhaps, in a revolution than in ordinary times. For revolutions



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are the eras of moment, the times when the mind of peoples is most likely to change."<sup>1</sup>

It is possible that these utterances, which have been reprinted in America, have sunk into the conscience or the understanding of some of our domestic heralds of the New Day. To this time, however, no evidence of any such effect transpires. The flood of evil propaganda, the work of the near-Left allies of the radical extremists, continues. The artifice developed during the war in justifying the faith-breaking of the German Government and the atrocities committed by the German land and naval forces found new employment after November, 1917, and a wider range of application. But the justification of German atrocities called for only a moderate equipment in the technique of Jesuitry. Now came a new set of atrocities against humankind, not committed by an imperial power but by a group of fanatic intellectuals, calling themselves proletarians, and carrying on in the name of social justice. The nature of the justification of evil means had to undergo a complete alteration.

When the first accounts of Bolshevik outrages began to ap-

<sup>1</sup> "In Tyrannos": A Reply to Henri Barbusse. *The Nation*, February 8, 1922. In this connection I quote a passage published by me twelve years ago ("Socialism and Success," 1910), which *then* represented, I prefer to believe, the convictions of the leading exponents of Socialism in America: "After all, we cannot be sure about our goals—about the ends for which we strive. Every end for which man has striven has been found, when achieved or partly achieved, a disappointment. Every political or social or religious cause, from the triumph of which they have expected so much, has been found in victory to be less than the thing imagined. Often it has been found to be the opposite of what men desired. Socialism itself will prove a disappointment to its devotees. But every advancement of ethical standards has been a permanent gain. Every moralization of the means which men employ in their contests—whether in war, or politics or religion—has lifted up the race. . . . Let us with might and main strive for the ideal which possesses us; but let us do it with a willingness to suffer an endless chain of defeats rather than compromise the means which we employ—knowing that the sanctioning of fanaticism or the condonation of Jesuitry invariably reacts upon our cause."

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pear, they were met, as a rule, by denunciations of the capitalist press and by denials. With the repeated authentication of these accounts by Socialist testimony, denials became fewer, and the facts, for the most part, came to be ignored. With further authentication from refugees and travellers and from the official Bolshevik newspapers, a new mode began. At first, it was timidly apologetic. But as the flood of testimony increased, so also came the need of more outspoken justification and the building up of new interpretations of old terms and established principles. The practice has continued to the present time; the latest issues of the leading journals of opinion show Jesuitry still at the game. Throughout all this campaign one note has never been absent. That is the denunciation of the capitalist press. And hence has arisen the hoax—the most absurd hoax ever perpetrated upon any section of the American people—that in all this Russian business the insurgent press has been printing the truth, while the capitalist press has been suppressing and distorting it. Every open-minded person who has really wanted the facts and has searched for them knows that the contrary is the reality. If so complex a matter could be expressed statistically, one would be justified in saying that nine-tenths of all the worth-while and dependable information printed regarding Soviet Russia has appeared in the capitalist press; while that nine-tenths of all that has appeared in the insurgent press purporting to be fact has been fiction, and that all not purporting to be fact has been nothing more than Jesuitical apologetics. But all that is another matter, with which I mean to deal in another volume.



## PART SIX

THIS campaign has been waged intensively and continuously. Its evil effects could from the beginning be seen and measured by any one who took the trouble to look carefully at what was happening about him. The extremists everywhere were emboldened to excesses of speech and action which otherwise they would not have dared; and so rose to an extreme pitch the reaction against them. "Very well," said the hundred-percenters, the crusaders of the Right, "if this is what you mean by Liberalism, radicalism and Socialism, we will show you what we mean by Americanism." And then came fierce and cruel reprisals, violations of Americanism, of democracy, of civilization itself. One reaction toward the dark ages was met by another and a mightier one. And then the exploiters of mankind, the seekers of privilege, ever alert for an advantage, took occasion of the turbulence to regain what they had lost.

"'Tis an old lesson; Time approves it true." Unfortunately, it is a lesson that evidently must be relearned every few years. None knew it better than the party Socialists; but they chose to forget it when most they needed to keep it in mind. Revolutionism had again shown that it always brings to the top the Reaction of the Right, and sets back the cause of social justice.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The effects of revolutionism on the modern working-class movement since its beginning are related in detail in Robert Hunter's masterly work, "Violence and the Labor Movement." A close perusal of the volume might possibly benefit some of the fiery apostles of this creed, as well as some of their Jesuitical apologists. The Bourbons of the Left, however, though they forget easily, seem to learn—if at all—only by the most painful experience.

## CHAPTER II

## THE SOCIALIST PARTY

## PART ONE

AMERICAN Socialism as a constructive force touched its highest point in the national convention of 1912 at Indianapolis. That convention was fronted by a party crisis. The cult of "direct" action, sponsored by the I. W. W., had won many proselytes; and the term had come again to mean what it had meant forty years before, in the days of Bakunin. In its extreme form it meant, negatively, contempt for government and abstention from political effort; and positively, reliance upon conspiracy, sabotage and destruction. In its milder forms it meant anything the individual chose to read into it. A number of professed Socialists newly caught with the contagion had succeeded in getting themselves elected as delegates, and they made themselves felt and heard in the convention.

This noisy and aggressive minority was treated by the majority with small patience and scant courtesy. It was, in the dominant view, a minority of heretics and rebels, sinning against the faith and giving aid and comfort to the enemy. All authoritative propaganda of the time emphasized the constructive, the ethical, the humanitarian aspect of Socialism. The platforms, the official leaflets, the books and other writings of leading Socialists were, in the main, consistent with one another. Had any anti-Socialist of the period of 1906-14 pictured a Lenin-Trotsky usurpation as a possible Socialist method or a Lenin-Trotsky régime as a Socialist ideal, he



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would have drawn upon himself from the recognized propagandists of the faith a storm of denunciation. Socialism was explained, not as a reversion to tyranny, terrorism and loot, but as the next stage in the march of civilization. True, there was to be revolution, but only in the sense that the change was to be thorough-going. The transition from capitalism would be made with the minimum of social dislocation, the maximum of regard for individual well-being. The bourgeois state was not to be overthrown and abolished; it was to be conquered at the polls and gradually transformed into a *social* state, functioning for the greatest good of the greatest number. Socialism did not mean Communism; it meant the fullest individualism consistent with the common welfare; and on few points did Socialist exegetics dwell with greater elaboration and emphasis.

Even the class war, though emphasized as a fact, was described in terms not overly terrifying to the timid. In those days the capitalist was not necessarily a bad man; he was quite as much a slave (though a lucky one) to the system as was the proletarian. The chief anathema was reserved for the revolutionary extremist and his dilettante worshipper, the Super-Radical; and no dictum was oftener on the lips of the orthodox than that the extremist and his sentimental adulator were, consciously or unconsciously, mere tools of reaction. For the world at large, Socialism meant *internationalism*, the federation of free peoples, with ample allowances for the claims of national allegiance; it could never mean *anti-nationalism*. Finally, and fundamental to all else, Socialism meant democracy; everybody—at least every adult—must have a voice and vote in the conduct of affairs. Without democracy there could be no Socialism.

If sometimes the phrase "dictatorship of the proletariat"

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was heard, it was explained in platonic terms, or else, on the authority of the great Wilhelm Liebknecht, flatly repudiated. "The political power," he wrote in his widely circulated pamphlet, "No Compromise—No Political Trading," "which the Social Democracy aims at and which it will win, no matter what its enemies may do, has not for its object the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat, but the suppression of the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie." Minority rule was denounced. The doctrine of the mastery of one class by another, even should the ruling class be a majority, was disavowed; and did any one arise to charge such a purpose or to predict such an outcome, the heckler was silenced by another authoritative statement from Liebknecht:

"The clear statement of our party program stamps as a slander the assertion of our opponents that Socialism will secure the ruling power in the state for the laboring class. We have already said that the idea of mastery is above all undemocratic and consequently in opposition to the principles of Socialism."

The ideal of the displacement of one class by another was freely acknowledged to be no better than the ideal of a mediæval peasants' revolt. Only as the working class identified its interests with the common interests of all humanity was it justified in striving for the overthrow of the capitalist class and the installation of a new order. In brief, the authoritative Socialism of the pre-war period sought to place itself in accord with the highest ethical concepts of the time.

This was the picture presented; and though a few ribald extremists hung about the fringes of the crowd and jeered at it, and though most of the illuminati of the coteries superciliously rejected it as a thing quite too tame for souls of the



revolutionary vision and fire, it was the *official* picture, and it had behind it the sanction of repeated verdicts from the membership.

At the convention the Left displayed a fairly well organized front. Of course not all its members—perhaps not even half—were outright “direct” actionists. The faction included persons of every degree of gradation from propagandists of the deed to mere emotional flappers. The faction was, however, at its core, a reincarnation of the old foe against which Marx had thundered and which supposedly had been vanquished and laid to rest. This re-embodied thing had now come forth in a new guise, and it had brought to its support a hitherto unknown element in social radicalism—an element that had sprung up as a result of the Lawrence strike in the early part of the year and was now hysterically making itself known. This was the element somewhat derisively referred to as “sentimental impossibilists” and “pink-tea revolutionists,” though now usually known as “parlor Bolsheviks.” To the Roaring Jims and Wild Bills of the hinterland had been allied the Esmeraldas and Reginalds of the metropolitan coteries.

This alliance of “fanatic roughneck and sentimental soft-head” in the propagation of a resuscitated heresy was looked upon by the guardians of the Socialist faith as a grave menace. The movement, unless checked, would overturn and ruin all that had been built up in forty years of hard and courageous work. The issue was squarely met. The committee on constitution brought in a new rule (the famous Article II., section 6), expelling from the party any one who “advocates crime, sabotage or other methods of violence as a weapon of the working-class to aid in its emancipation.”

Around this proposal the forensic battle raged for hours. Against it were those who believed in sabotage and were quite

willing (except for their fear of the police) to employ it; those who believed in it, but were satisfied to leave its advocacy and its practice to others, and those who, with no particular inclination toward it, were unwilling to offend its supporters. Most of the arguments made by the speakers of this wing were obviously insincere. The spokesmen of the Left would not frankly justify sabotage, but they wanted the doors for its advocacy left wide open. The word might mean anything, they said; and the adoption of the proposal would penalize the most innocent methods. They exhausted their ingenuity in quibbling terms and evasive pleas.

Of this patent disingenuousness the speakers of the majority wing took full advantage. To the taunting question of the extremists, “What do you mean by sabotage?” they replied: “We mean just what *you* mean, and we know *your* meaning exactly.” “Is it pure accident,” asked one of the majority, “that all these comrades who think the word ‘sabotage’ irrelevant happen to be the same who may perhaps be suspected of a fondness for these matters? . . . I fear that our self-styled revolutionary comrades haven’t always got the courage of their convictions.” The speakers of the constructive element placed the party on the side of evolutionism, legalism and order. Unquestionably the note of expediency was heard; “politics” was not forgotten; but in most of the speeches—particularly those of Delegates Charles Dobbs, of Kentucky; Winfield R. Gaylord, of Wisconsin, and W. L. Garver, of Missouri—the ethical note was strongly emphasized. “The working class,” said Mr. Dobbs, “is entitled to the best that there is in our civilization; . . . and if the capitalist class desires to stain its hands with fraud and to practise violence, let us, who represent a new and constructive force, take our stand in favor of order as against chaos.”



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The convention agreed with him; and by a vote of 191 to 90, amid tense excitement, formally condemned the reactionaries of the Left. A referendum to the membership confirmed the verdict by a vote of 13,215 to 4,196, and in the following February, by a vote of 22,495 to 10,944, William D. Haywood, who had refused to accept the verdict, was recalled from the National Executive Committee.

### PART TWO

WITH the outbreak of the World War in August, 1914, came the beginning of another and a more serious reaction. The shock of that terrible event awoke the passions of race and nationality; and the fine phrases that men had so carefully schooled themselves into believing that they believed, suddenly became hollow and meaningless. The party revealed itself almost immediately as pro-German. Its composition made this outcome, under the circumstances, inevitable. Most important of the party elements, because of its numbers and of its general stability on matters of purely Socialist belief and practice, was the German group. This group, many of whose older members had been refugees from persecution, had, a decade earlier, regarded with bitter hatred everything connected with the Kaiser's régime; but it had been gradually and insensibly conquered by the intensive propaganda of Germanism, and its response to the clash of arms was immediate and unmistakable. Next in importance were the other alien elements, in the main subservient to German influence, particularly the numerous Yiddish group, who speak a German dialect, and whose

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culture, whatever its degree, is predominantly German. The Irish, of course, were predominantly anti-English and therefore potentially pro-German.

Rather a heterogeneous assortment was the American group; and here any attempt at generalization fails. There were some who, while holding fast to Socialist principles, supported the cause of the Allies and favored American participation in the war, and who gradually slipped away from the party or openly denounced it and resigned; there were others, no less sincere, who at the call of patriotism found their Socialism oozing out, and these also withdrew; and there were still others who, fanatical and perverse, for a while stayed on, becoming, with the shift of events, ever more impossibilist and revolutionary. It is these who, with some alien auxiliaries, have from time to time staged the series of dramatic group secessions from the party and have become Communists. For to whatever lengths the party might go in its reaction from its earlier policies, it could never quite satisfy these ardent souls, hungry for the ultimate word and gesture in revolutionary extremism. )

It needs no modern Oxenstierna to observe with what little logic and consistency and principle men's minds (that is, some men's) are governed. In spite of all the lofty declarations about pacifism, neutrality, internationalism, democracy and civilization, came an outburst of racialism that brought the party in effect to the support of German military aggression and kept it there till the armistice. Coincident was a swingback toward the tactics of the extremists, whom two years before it had banned. That swingback became more pronounced after April, 1917, when the party, pledging itself to oppose, by all the means within its power, the prosecution of the war, virtually placed itself outside the law. It was now further



shown by the repeal of the anti-sabotage clause. It became still more pronounced after November of that year, when the Bolshevik usurpation revealed an easier way to victory than that which the party had so often and so emphatically approved; and it was not sensibly checked until the winter of 1920-21, when, repudiated alike by Lenin and by the extremists at home, the party was brought up with a round turn and compelled to reorient itself.

Almost from the beginning of the World War the party ranged itself (though of course in the name of neutrality and internationalism) on the side of the German Foreign Office. At no time did it utter a word of protest against the invasion of neutral Belgium, or against the frightful exactions levied upon the Belgian people by the German army, or against the seizure and transportation to Germany of the machinery, rolling stock and raw material by which the Belgian workers made their living, or against the wholesale deportations of men, women and children. The pathetic and desperate plea of the Belgian working class to the working class of America, made public Jan. 7, 1917, might have been expected to move the most callous heart. But though it brought a response from the working class in many of the neutral countries and from the German party minority, and even some portion of the German party majority, it was wholly ignored by the American party. In other times this party had been loudly articulate regarding atrocities, real or imagined, not only at home, but in other lands; yet the unparalleled atrocities in Belgium, Serbia, Rumania, and Armenia wrung from it not even a whisper.

No German violation of international law awakened its indignation; indeed, where in any case it spoke—officially or through its leaders—it more or less openly justified such

violations as seemed to aid the German cause. It declined to commit itself against air raids on undefended towns or submarine attacks on passenger vessels. The slaughter of women and children moved it to no concern whatever. Though the "political representative of the working class," it ignored the murder of civilian workmen. Even if it had no interest in the fate of well-to-do persons such as those who could afford to voyage on the *Lusitania*, it might still have been expected to show some measure of concern for the fate of sailors, hostlers, cattlemen and other indubitable members of the working class torpedoed on the seas. The German party minority (the Liebknecht-Ledebour element) vigorously protested against all these savage cruelties, but the American party uttered no word of condemnation.

Its censure was reserved for things at home. Through its leaders and its party press it made light of the employment in this country by the German Government of a body of spies and conspirators, and it ridiculed the efforts of the American Government to apprehend them. In the same breath it denounced the sale of munitions to the Allies and the efforts of our own Government to prepare itself against German aggression, and thus gave its sanction to German preparedness while obstructing preparedness at home. It carried this attitude further when it decreed, in December, 1915, by a vote of 11,041 to 742, the expulsion of any Socialist official who should vote for any measure of preparedness; and in voting this decree it included the ballots of Russian Jewish, German, Austrian and Bulgarian aliens who favored the militarism of the Central Powers and opposed the defensive measures of the United States. Though it had no word to say against the German declaration of war, it officially declared that the entry of the United States into the conflict was a crime against hu-



manity and that "in all modern history there has been no war more unjustifiable."<sup>1</sup>

## PART THREE

Soon after the Bolshevik usurpation virtually the whole of the Socialist party became strongly pro-Bolshevist. Had there been no World War, had the March revolution in Russia taken place in a time of world peace, nothing can be more certain than that it was the Kerensky régime that would have had the support of the American Socialist party and that the November revolution would have been denounced and its fomentors execrated. The American Socialist party had been Menshevik. Its interpretation of Socialist principles had agreed with that of the minority of the Russian Social Democratic Party. The Russian writer most favorably known in America as an exponent of Socialist doctrine was George Plechanoff. It was Plechanoff and Paul Axelrod and Vladimir Bourtschew, and the scores of others less well known, of like views, all bitter opponents of the Bolsheviks, whose word would have been taken as to what was happening in Russia. But Ger-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Bertram Benedict, a Socialist who voted for the resolution that included this infamous declaration, seems to argue, in his book, "The Larger Socialism" (pp. 140-41), that it was the war already being waged, and not America's participation therein, which was meant as the object of this particular denunciation. The language of this section, he says, is obscure, and he expresses what seems to be astonishment (for his own meaning is anything but clear) that so many persons have failed in a proper interpretation of the passage. It is enough to say that the whole context of the resolution supports the accepted interpretation, and that the sentence immediately preceding the passage in question, "We brand the declaration of war by our Government as a crime against the people of the United States and against the nations of the world," reveals the intent and meaning of the framers of the resolution beyond cavil.

manism, followed by a drift toward impossibilism, had done its work; and Bolshevism, because it promised peace (which could not then have been else than a German peace) was acclaimed. Whatever the Bolshevik régime did, no matter how flatly it contravened what had before been regarded as Socialism, was now justified, and the most pointed and responsible testimony against the Bolsheviks was disregarded. After the earlier days the Socialist organs as a rule suppressed all testimony unfavorable to the new régime, keeping up at the same time, along with its "Liberal" and radical colleagues, a tirade against the capitalist press for its alleged unfairness.

Conversion to Bolshevism, and the duty of defending a government of force, terrorism and loot, also made necessary new definitions of words and phrases which formerly had been stock terms, never out of use. There was "democracy," for instance. It was now revealed that the word really meant something very different from what it had been supposed to mean before the war. In a bourgeois republic there was not, and could not be, any such thing as democracy. Only in a Socialist republic could it exist. Soviet Russia was such a land. True, what was found there was a "limited democracy," but for such of the dwellers in that land as were well disposed toward the régime there was a range of freedom quite unattainable in other lands wherein people went through the empty farce of voting for laws and for officials. As for the others—the ill disposed, the opponents of the party in power—all they had to do was to change their minds, to give up their opposition, and they, too, would find freedom. The "dictatorship of the proletariat" was not such a bad thing when you came to think it over. It was necessary, during the transition, as a means of "crushing out opposition," but would in time be given over. Of course, if the rascally bourgeoisie and other



counter-revolutionists, including Socialists, kept up their opposition to the régime, the dictatorship would have to continue indefinitely; but thanks to the secret tribunal and the firing squad—those most persuasive agents of democracy—there was every hope that the antagonism would soon subside. Then, too, there was the matter of the repression of free speech, free assemblage, and a free press. It was an odious thing in a bourgeois republic, but a most virtuous thing in Soviet Russia. The difference between Communism and Socialism, once so important a matter in Socialist exegetics, was now discovered to be no difference at all. The two things were really the same; they did not conflict; the apparent difference lay only "in tactics influenced by varying conditions in the various countries."

Also, as the war went on, into the speech and writings of the Socialist leaders crept a growing extenuation for I. W. W. and other extremist propaganda and tactics. In public addresses, editorials and testimony before courts and investigating committees the evidences of this change are thickly sown. A few years earlier there had been nothing in all this extremism that was excusable, or even tolerable. Real I. W. W.-ism, according to the then prevalent view, was an expression of physical-force anarchism; it meant conspiracy, destruction, warfare against the state, internal conflicts in the ranks of labor, the violation of majority rights, an effort toward the supremacy of an oligarchy of bandits. Moreover, according to this view, I. W. W.-ism had a dual doctrine—esoteric and exoteric, one thing for the initiated and another for the outsider—and its propaganda was most to be distrusted when it took on a seeming of mildness, candor and legality. Now, in the face of a new set of circumstances, a new attitude was taken.

Under the pressure of the time the quondam legalists and

the perennial illegalists drew somewhat closer together. They were braving a common danger, and for a time their interests were common. Moreover, with the justification of the Bolshevik usurpation and rule of terror came the necessity for a more lenient attitude regarding Bolshevik imitators at home. The epidemic of revolutionism following the armistice brought the party new problems. There was no Right in this oddly shaped body, but there was a Centre, composed of moderates (of a sort) who wanted one kind of thing, and there was a Left, composed of extremists, who wanted something very different. Both elements must be conciliated if the organization was to be held together. A doctrinal dualism arose, within the practice of which the revolutionary phrase flourished, while at the same time, for the benefit of the moderates and of the public, the meaning of this phrase was translated into something seemly and of good import. You could have it both ways, or any one of several ways. The oft-execrated I. W. W. had now his turn to look on and jeer.

He was not such a bad fellow, after all, this I. W. W. All those dreadful stories about barn-burning, the destruction of crops, the driving of twenty-penny spikes into sawlogs, the constant efforts toward the disruption of rival working-class bodies, had turned out to be exaggerations; or if some of the things did actually happen, they were merely unfortunate and misguided expressions of the thirst after social righteousness and of the hope for universal brotherhood. Even though these I. W. W.s might sometimes do what seemed to belie the fact, peace and benevolence were in their hearts and minds. Did not they themselves say so? "Organize, organize!" an editorial in an issue of *New Solidarity* had exclaimed; "*peaceable*, economic direct action will yet triumph over the direct, brutal, physical violence of the capitalist class!" And an authoritative



Socialist periodical promptly quoted this passage, and put it forth as a stinging rebuke to those who had ungenerously suspected the I. W. W. of sometimes straying from the paths of love and moderation. So all extremist propaganda, it came now to be explained, was to be taken at its face value only when it manifested the gentleness of the sucking dove. When, on the other hand, it sounded revolutionary and subversive, it was to be taken merely as a manifestation of rhetorical overstrain or an uninhibited emotionalism. Even the frank advocacy of sabotage, now that the penalty had been removed, came to have its virtuous aspects. But there was this difference. Sabotage, according to the new interpretation for public consumption, was not at all what the stupid bourgeoisie imagined it, but only mass action against the production of fraudulent commodities. As one writer whom I take to be a Socialist (or to have been one at the time) put the matter: "Proletarian sabotage moves progressively toward truth, beauty, love."<sup>1</sup>

#### PART FOUR

It cannot be said that this policy made measurable headway with the extremists either inside or outside the fold. Where was the joy of the revolutionary phrase or the revolutionary deed if all its heroic meaning was thus to be explained away? The more they thought about it the more infuriated they became. They assailed the party leaders as "yellows,"

<sup>1</sup> "The Intellectuals and the Wage-Workers," by Herbert Ellsworth Cory, 1919 (p. 211).

"Centrists" and "opportunists," and those inside began preparations to join those outside and to take the party with them. Their campaign is treated in the following chapter and can be but incidentally mentioned here. At the Emergency Convention of September, 1919, they split the party into three factions.

Though still retaining a considerable number of the deeply carminated, the party was now freed from the more violent and noisy of the extremists. But the revolutionary spirit still prevailed. The convention, though approving the Soviet Government, had declined to apply for affiliation with the Third International. Instead it condemned the old Second International and asked for the convocation of a new congress. This attitude was opposed by the Left element still remaining, who caused the submission to the membership of a referendum declaring for the Moscow International. The announcement, made in January, 1920, showed a majority (3,475 to 1,444) for the Left. The party was rueful over the loss of so large a part of its dues-paying membership (which had fallen from the high-water mark of 120,000 to less than 40,000); it still had hopes of not being altogether cast out and repudiated by Moscow, and it spoke fair words to the seceders. At its convention in New York City in the following summer it passed a resolution, almost unanimously, which, first, asked the rebels to return; second, proposed the creation of joint campaign committees between the loyalists and the rebels; third, advocated the taking of steps, after the campaign, for a reunion, and fourth, proposed the creation of a national advisory council composed of "all working-class organizations" for combatting the forces of reaction. It also adopted a policy regarding Russia and revolutionism in general which it was hoped would placate all the remaining elements. It formally



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expressed itself in favor of Bolshevism in Russia; in favor of the dictatorship of a minority (admitted by one of the leading speakers to be outnumbered 20 to 1); in favor of the Third International, though protesting against the imposition of its phraseology and methods upon Socialist movements in other countries; in favor also of the giving of active aid and support to the existing Bolshevik régime. "It should be the task of the Socialist International," read the resolution on international relations, "to aid our comrades in Russia to *maintain and fortify their political control.*"

But however strongly it favored Bolshevism, with its minority dictatorship, its "seizure and holding of power," and its "crushing out of opposition," in Russia, a different note was sounded for the United States. For home use none of these things was wanted. Here the party sought "the end of restoring political democracy and bringing about complete industrial freedom." One of the delegates, it is true, denounced Bolshevism and advocated withdrawal from the Third International, a body "neither Socialist nor international," but he had only a small following. The convention was overwhelmingly for usurpation, dictatorship, and force in Russia, and for democracy and persuasion in America.

There were not lacking those who asked: Why the discrimination? For, if minority dictatorship is right in Russia, would it not be equally right here at home? If it is the duty of a Socialist International to aid the Russian minority which has already seized power, would it not be an equal duty of such a body to aid an American minority to a like goal? If the conscription of labor and the suppression of speech, press, and assemblage by an oligarchy in the sacred name of the proletariat are blessings in Russia, would they not be equal blessings in the United States? That Socialism would

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take on somewhat different forms in the various countries, according to material and psychical conditions, had always been admitted by its leading opponents; but not before had it been declared that Socialism accepts with equal favor the most diametrical opposites of principle and method.

Nevertheless, to the leaders the discrimination seemed a shrewd and expedient one to make. It ought to satisfy moderates and extremists alike and win general support at the polls. From Moscow, however, came the cruel and ungrateful repudiation of the party and the demand for the expulsion of its most prominent leader; while the November elections proved a disaster.

## PART FIVE

FROM all that had been said between Armistice Day and its second anniversary about the height, breadth and velocity of the "wave of unrest" that was asserted to be sweeping the country, one might naturally have expected some revolutionary result at the polls. The Socialist party, in particular, should have made enormous gains. The people were waking up, it was said; they were growing distrustful of the government, in fact distrustful of all bourgeois governments; they were enthusiastic for Bolshevik Russia and eager for a revolutionary change at home. The regular parties made their appeals, and two new parties, the Farmer Labor and the Single Tax, came into the contest. In due time came the Presidential election. To the more sanguine among the insurgents, even up to the beginning of the third week thereafter, it appeared that notable results had been scored. The Socialist summary, sent



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out on election night by the party's national secretary, was the following:

"Early returns indicate vote up to expectations. Debs ahead of Cox in many precincts. Early scattered returns indicate a vote of from 2,500,000 to 3,000,000."

It was glorious news, officially stamped, and naturally the New York *Call*, the Milwaukee *Leader* and the *Appeal to Reason* relayed the information to their readers. "Socialists Poll over 2,000,000 Votes," screamed the *Appeal* of Nov. 13th, in a page-wide heading. The lesser Socialist press copied more or less faithfully, and not until after the middle of December was there any considerable modification in the statement of results.

A greater caution possessed the press of the Farmer Labor party. But *The Nation*, *The New Republic* and *The Freeman* were sure that something important had happened. Before election *The Nation* had urged its readers to vote for either Debs or Christensen, or even Macauley, the Single Taxer. *The New Republic*, while not rejecting the moral value of a vote for Debs, had made definite choice of Christensen. *The Freeman*, which looks upon all political action as mere foolishness, expressed no choice; but a glimmer here and there through its pages indicated that it might regard a large protest vote as a not undesirable thing. After election *The New Republic* showed, in its first mood, something less than exultation, it is true, but a fair degree of satisfaction. On November 17th it had this:

"Vague estimates give them [the Farmer Laborites] from half to three quarters of a million. Returns still incomplete put the Socialist vote somewhere between a million and a half and two million. . . . [The Non-Partisan League] announces a total of over three million votes in nine States."

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*The Nation* of November 17th, though reporting a huge Socialist vote, revealed some disappointment. "The Farmer Labor party," it admitted, "made no very remarkable showing at the polls." The Socialists, it said, did better, but not what they should have done. "Debs polled . . . twice the Socialist high-water mark of 1912," it continued, "but the total, some 1,800,000, is much less than Socialists and non-Socialist protestants had hoped for."

*The Freeman*, for all its disdain of political action, was more generous in its estimate of the vote for Debs; more gladdened, too; and it took pains to point out the vote's significance. It said, November 17th:

"The size of his vote is not important. We do not, in fact, know how many votes he got—probably about two million. The important and significant thing, however, the thing that will mightily impress the historian who comes after us and lives in calmer times, is that a political party had selected as its candidate, and an immense number of people saw fit to vote for, a prisoner in a Federal penitentiary, serving sentence for sedition."

So the size of the vote, which was both important and unimportant, was "about 2,000,000." Others for a time also kept up the pleasing fiction.

None of these computations was within measurable distance of the truth. Neither the Farmer Labor party nor the Non-Partisan League polled anything like the number of votes with which it was credited. The Socialists did not poll "between two and a half and three million votes," nor "two million," nor "1,800,000," nor "between one and a half and two million." Neither did they poll "twice the Socialist high-water mark of 1912." The total insurgent vote, in the official returns, dwindled to painfully small dimensions, and the



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Socialist part of it, in an enormously increased electorate, was but little more than 900,000.

The total vote was 26,759,708, as against 18,537,514 in 1916 and 15,052,507 in 1912. The Socialist party total was 914,869, or 3.42 per cent. In 1912 it had been 901,062 (usually wrongly given as 897,011), a percentage of 5.99. There was thus a relative loss in eight years of 42.9 per cent. To have equalled the vote of 1912 the party would have had to poll a total of 1,602,906. It would then have done no more than to "break even," as the saying is; and a party that intends to take over the political and industrial control of the nation and can do no more, after eight years of organization and propaganda, than to hold its own, is evidently headed for the abyss.<sup>1</sup>

The Farmer Labor vote was 264,727, or a trifle less than 1 per cent. Together these two parties polled, not the "three or four millions" predicted before election, not even the "two or three millions" over and over again claimed after the election, but 1,179,596 votes. The percentage is 4.41, a relative loss of 26.3 per cent from the vote of the Socialist party alone

<sup>1</sup> The remarkable record, in the face of so many obstacles, made by the Socialist party in the election of 1912, is not generally recognized. The party had first to deal with a seditious and mutinous element in the convention, and a part of the defeated element unquestionably sabotaged the work carried on during the following campaign. No sooner was the campaign started than the party had to face about and put down—by force of arms, so to speak—a vicious revolt engineered by Haywood and his lieutenants over a trivial question of campaign management. When again it set itself to its tasks it found itself faced by a new party, the Progressives, headed by the most striking personality in American politics, standing on a platform containing nineteen planks lifted almost word for word from the Socialist list of "immediate demands." A number of prominent near-Socialists, who had usually acted with the party and voted its ticket, went over to Roosevelt, and the fear was general that many of the rank and file would follow. The vote polled, which was within a fraction of 6 per cent of the total, as against 2.83 per cent in the election of 1908, is an impressive register of the strength of Socialist sentiment in that year. Had there been no Progressive party, the Socialist vote might easily have been doubled.

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in 1912. The vote of the Non-Partisan League, which was cast for various tickets, is not separately computable.

Technically, this was the insurgent protest vote, the registration of the "wave of unrest." There was also a Prohibition party total of 187,470, but this had nothing to do with industrial questions or theories of the state. There was also a Single Tax total of 5,747, but the nature of this vote is too problematical and its size too inconsiderable for discussion. Finally, there was also a Socialist Labor party vote of 30,363. This vote may or may not be, according to individual opinion, a factor in the expression of protest. At any rate, it represented exactly 19 fewer citizens than those who cast their ballots for the Socialist Labor party eight years earlier. The insurgent protest vote, in proportion to the total electorate, had thus declined in eight years by more than 26 per cent.

Explanations and excuses for the poor results were not lacking. *The Call* had something to say about "internal dissensions," but more about "malicious government persecution." In "thousands of cities and towns," it said, "the parties of capitalism and the 100 per centers had completely destroyed local organizations." This statement could hardly have been true, but in any case it squared ill with the stereotyped Socialist and other insurgent pre-election formula that all the alleged persecution was merely arousing resentment and enormously increasing the number of persons who would vote the insurgent tickets. One or the other, the prediction or the explanation, was grossly at fault. But *The Call* had further explanations. It asserted that the party suffered greatly from "gross neglect and fraud" at the ballot boxes. "It is certain," ran the charge, "that there is a wider discrepancy between the Socialist vote cast this year and the vote reported than in any other national election." Except as to a few more



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or less dubious instances no particulars were given, and it is unlikely that the charge had much substance.

The higher browed exponents of insurgency came forth with other explanations, though none of them were much to the point. The real explanations were unlikely to come from such sources. Insurgent propaganda went very well among the partisans of the lost cause of the central empires, very well also among the higher-ups in Moscow, equally well among some of the denizens of Greenwich Village, but it went ill among the people generally in the United States. The people had decided that however bad things may be, and however much they needed mending, the proposals offered by these groups were not attractive. Insurgency, and especially that part of it exemplified by organized Socialism, had lost prestige by reason of its advocacy of an internationalism which manifested itself mainly in defaming one's own country; its advocacy of a militant pacifism which revealed itself, at a critical time, as an ally of German imperialism and frightfulness; and by its hypocritical defense of the Red Terror in Russia while clamoring for justice, free speech, free press and free assemblage in America. Insurgency had so played its cards as to give over the game to conservative reaction.

### PART SIX

FROM December of that year (1920) dates a further swing of the party to the Right. In official pronouncements, editorials in the press and expressions of influential members a new note was sounded. The Bolshevik seizure of power in November, 1917, once the most glorious event in the world's history,

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began to look questionable, the tactics and measures of the Soviet régime began to show grave defects, while an increasingly bitter resentment was voiced at Moscow's insistence upon the 21 points. There was still hope that by a brave front Lenin might be persuaded to relent, but by the time of the Detroit convention in the summer of 1921 this hope had been abandoned, and the Soviet rulers were denounced as a "wrecking crew" who had "murdered Russian Socialists" and were obstructing the world-wide victory of the proletariat. The convention decided not to affiliate with any international association, thus in effect rejecting the 21 points. Its membership was now officially reported as 17,000. Cutting itself off from the possibility of further affiliation with any of the radical extremist elements, it appointed a committee to inquire into the advisability of taking joint action with working-class organizations of the more moderate sort. By this action it definitely faced about and set itself for the return journey. When, in the following September, by another spectacular secession, the remaining group of revolutionaries left it in a body, it found itself at last with a fairly homogeneous membership. At the convention of 1922 the work of the committee on affiliation with working-class bodies was approved, and for the first time in its history the party declared for joint political action with non-Socialist organizations. Where possible this policy was carried out in the following campaign. The results, however, were not encouraging. A general summary is at this writing impossible. But in New York City, for instance, judged by the "straight vote," the loss was 50 per cent.



## CHAPTER III

### THE REDS

#### PART ONE

THE word "radical" is used variously. *The Freeman*, a periodical written in proper syntax, but otherwise the most gorgeously absurd publication printed in the United States, would limit its application to a person who believes in the abolition of the political state and the imposition of a tax on the economic rent of land. This meaning, it must be said, has no acceptance anywhere; and very likely only a few persons have ever heard of it. As commonly used, the word stands for a general type of person throughout a wide range of schools and occupations. There are radicals in art, religion, business, possibly in science, and mayhap even in poker playing. What most persons seem to mean by the term is one who strays from the normal and accepted, but who manages to hold himself in somewhere this side of what is colloquially known as "the limit"; an extremist, on the other hand, being one who knows no frontiers and is often, if not usually, found on the far side of any boundaries that may conceivably be drawn. It seems best to retain something of the common usage. The word "radical" is generic; qualified by the word "social" it is more definite, but still generic. A Super-Radical is a particular kind of social radical (or extremist, according as one chooses to look at him). A Red (with "revolutionist" or "revolutionary" for a close synonym) is another.

The word "Red" is specific. Since August, 1914, its mean-



ing has shifted; it has swung, like so many other things, to the Left. But the swing has tended only to a greater definiteness. Before the war the word included the Socialist or Social Democrat. Now, unless he is a Left-Winger (if any such remains in the fold), it excludes him. It does include, however, a member of the Socialist Labor party. The Red is a social extremist who takes his inspiration and his phrases from Moscow. He is a revolutionary Communist. One hesitates in listing an I. W. W. in the category. Technically, an I. W. W. is not now a Red. Assuredly he does not take his inspiration from Moscow; and since 1919 he has undergone, at least in appearance, a great transformation. One of the main counts in the terrific indictment drawn up in July, 1920, by the Communists of America against their upstart rivals, the United Communists, was that the latter had descended into the sink of iniquity by catering to the Industrial Workers of the World, a company of white-livered bourgeois industrial unionists. Historically, however, the I. W. W. belongs. Years before Moscow set itself up as a papal seat for the promulgation of the true doctrine, the I. W. W. was industriously preaching much the same thing; and though fallen from his former estate he may yet return, the brighter and bolder for his eclipse. Clio, muse of history, must decide the listing; and there being no other place for him the I. W. W. goes here. If not technically a Red, he is at least a revolutionary.

The Red, then, is a revolutionary Communist with an extravagant fondness for revolutionary phrases. He may, like an I. W. W. of the earlier period, display an occasional proneness for translating some of these phrases into actions, or like an S. L. P., satisfy himself with the witchcraft of the phrases themselves and the ecstasy that comes of their ceaseless repetition. Or, again, like one of the Communists or of the United

Communists, he may find the highest reach of self-expression in taking part in the rites and mummeries of secret conclaves, where, deeming himself safe from espial, he imagines himself a plotter of armed insurrection against the capitalist state. But whether activist or pacifist, he is no true Red unless he finds his chief ecstasy in the imperious dictatorship of the revolutionary phrase.

This adoration of the phrase is a prime characteristic. Moreover, it is historic. It was a characteristic in the days of Marx, again in the days of John Most, and it has been particularly so during the last decade. "Just as the democrats made a sort of fetish of the words 'the people,'" wrote Marx in September, 1850, in resigning from the central committee of the Communist Alliance, "so you make one of the word 'proletariat.' Like them you substitute revolutionary phrases for revolutionary evolution." The fetish is no less powerful—indeed it is far more powerful—after 72 years of social agitation and economic and political change. The social extremism of the Red, so long as it keeps to the cult of proletarianism, may be any one of a thousand kinds, or any conceivable blend of contradictory kinds; but unless it voices itself in the revolutionary *cliché* it is naught; though it be honest in deed and word, it is not a true thing.

A useful distinction, easily comprehensible when centers are compared, but vague and uncertain at the peripheries, is that between the Red and the Super-Radical—between the radical who participates in the work of the various burlesque "fighting groups" and his dilettante auxiliary of the metropolitan coteries. The latter will be treated elsewhere. The Red, it is to be further observed, may or may not be a proletarian. Indeed, aside from the many indubitable proletarians in the I. W. W., a considerable majority of the Reds are, to use the



current, but woefully unscientific term, middle-class or upper-class "intellectuals." But if not a proletarian, he must assume the guise and employ the cant of proletarianism, else he is no better than a miserable Centrist, or that still baser thing, a bourgeois opportunist.

Perhaps the most astonishing feature of the radical movement since the outbreak of the World War has been the eclipsing of the I. W. W. In the earlier days it was always to this body, or to its mentors, the French Syndicalists, that one looked for the latest novelty in revolutionism. Now, tamed and subdued by Federal and State prosecutions, no less than by internal disturbances, the I. W. W. has mended its ways, and one must look for revolutionary guidance to the newer groups formed since the armistice and drawing their inspiration from Moscow. Pledged, by their adoption of the 21 points, to carry on an illegal as well as a legal movement, they must at least observe the forms. They must, from time to time, like the Hopi priests in their kivas, assemble in deep recesses to come forth with new revelations. In the manifestoes that issue after these periodical descents into the underworld one gets (unless one has already got it in the press dispatches from Moscow) the latest and freshest word regarding the uprising of the proletariat. In vehement language the world is told that the revolution is on and that the capitalist state is about to be overthrown; and if there has been any failure on the part of the sure-enough delegates to express themselves with the real revolutionary fire the lack has been supplied by some undercover agent of the Department of Justice, well-schooled in the proper terms. There is little that is original in these manifestoes. But the student curious in such matters will always study them with fresh interest for new evidences of the improving technique of the revolutionary phrase.

## PART TWO

Just so one looked in former days to the proclamations of the I. W. W. Here, also, most was derivative. The industrial unionism of that body was French of the First International period, revised and systematized on these shores by the late Daniel De Leon. Its administrative scheme for society, drawn up by the Rev. Thomas J. Haggerty, a former Catholic priest, in a diagram derisively termed "the wheel of fortune," was a rehash of many elements. Its glorification of sabotage was taken from Georges Sorel and Emile Pouget. What else one found in phrase and tactics—the earlier proneness to indulge in bogus free-speech fights, the widespread practice of sabotage, and the long-continued efforts to disrupt the Socialist party, the Socialist Labor party and the trade-unions, were imitations with improvements. The Socialists had had their free-speech fights in many places, conducted with a degree of common sense that usually brought the issue to a victory. It remained for the I. W. W. to transform the free-speech fight into a spectacular display of hoodlumism, with the result that sooner or later the rights of all insurgent organizations were restricted. As for sabotage, it is a new name for an old thing, too common everywhere. It was the I. W. W. which advocated it as an irresistible means of warfare against capitalism, which developed it into a system and which employed it intensively in many campaigns. Finally, the disrupting of rival organizations, political or industrial, was merely a renewal of the tactics of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance, organized by De Leon in 1896; and in the treatment which the S. L. P. received at the hands of the I. W. W. after 1908 the former body got a deserved dose of its own medicine.

Though originating nothing, the I. W. W. brought, by re-



combinations of old doctrine, and the importation of certain tactics and the revival of others, new features into the working-class struggle in America. It was "different"; and that fact of itself was with many an argument in its favor. So it drew converts from both the Socialists and the trade-unionists, and for a time it thrived. It made some headway (though this matter has been greatly exaggerated by its eulogists) in organizing the migratory and hitherto unorganized workers, among whom the A. F. of L. had worked persistently but with small success; and to the bolder and more active of these it was enabled to impart a fanatical earnestness. Moreover, by the staging of spectacular effects and by the use of the revolutionary phrase it made a dramatic appeal to the emotionalists, who turned from the tamer methods and duller routine of the Socialist party with weary impatience.

Much extenuation of the I. W. W. and no little glorification has been indulged in by certain writers, such as Paul F. Brissenden, the late Carleton H. Parker and Lewis S. Gannett. Mr. Brissenden, in his engaging volume, leads his I. W. W.'s through a "literary cake-walk" (to use a term of Mark Twain's) which has been the entertainment of many readers. But the crowning performance in this line is the article by Mr. Gannett in *The Nation* of Oct. 20, 1920. Those who have known the labor movement these last seventeen years will find little in Mr. Gannett's article even remotely resembling the actuality.

The Socialists who, in the early part of 1905, had protested against the formation of this body found, within a brief time, ample justification for their action. They had maintained that the effect could not be other than disruptive, since the project menaced the integrity of the movement for the organization of labor, both politically and industrially. It would do less harm

to the American Federation of Labor than to the Socialist party. The former would keep on organizing, just as it had done against the menace of the Knights of Labor, and later against the menace of the Socialist Trade and Labor Alliance. But the Socialist party (bitterly opposed to the S. T. and L. A.), which, while respecting the economic integrity of the trade-unions sought to carry the message of Socialism to the union workers, would find its work obstructed at every turn.

These predictions were soon fulfilled. Within six months after its organization the I. W. W. had started a civil war with the capmakers in both New York and Detroit, and within a year it had carried this internal struggle into many of the industrial centers of the country. By the end of three years it had lost or expelled every moderating element that had originally gone into it. Even the De Leon element, though disruptive so far as rival labor organizations were concerned, would have restrained the I. W. W. from some of the evil tendencies which it later developed. By rapid stages it passed to the status of a social and industrial Ishmaelite. It still continued to make a powerful appeal to the impressionable, but its power to organize any considerable part of the working class was gone by 1909.

The real nature of the older I. W. W. is to be found in a study of such narratives as the James Wilson pamphlet (1910); of such episodes as the attempt at reprisals in California after the conviction (an unjust one, I think) of Ford and Suhr (1913-14);<sup>1</sup> of the "literature" of sabotage, vio-

<sup>1</sup>There can be small doubt that the sentences of Ford and Suhr would have been shortened but for the threats made and violence committed in their behalf by the I. W. W. It is a satisfaction to me to recall that some years ago I published (*California Outlook*, February, 1917) an earnest plea for these men, intended for the eye of Governor Johnson. But the public sentiment favorable to them, which at an earlier time would have been powerful enough to have influenced the Governor, had by this time been dissipated through the turbulence of their professed "fellow-workers."



lence and destruction which for some years, particularly from 1909 to 1914, it poured forth in an endless stream, and of the files of trade-union periodicals and of the records of trade-unions that had to cope with its vicious efforts at disruption. The Wilson pamphlet is of itself a contribution of some importance. Wilson had been a member of the General Executive Board of the organization and the editor of the *Spokane Industrial Bulletin*. He took part in the Spokane free-speech fight of 1909. He tells a story of graft, fraud and double-dealing on the part of the executives of the I. W. W. which relates exactly what might have been expected from men who proclaimed the doctrine that theft may be a revolutionary act and that any means justifies a desired end. What he left casts a significant light on the earlier I. W. W.-ism, much more to the point than Mr. Brissenden's extenuating narrative or Mr. Gannett's dithyrambs. Up to August, 1914, no single force, element, movement or interest in the United States had done more to obstruct the cause of social justice than the I. W. W.

All this is to some extent a digression. But it is necessary in providing a background for the treatment of the newer groups of revolutionaries. How the I. W. W. met the war and how the Government and the States ultimately met the I. W. W. may be studied in the records of the great trial in Chicago in the summer of 1918, in the provisions of the various anti-Syndicalism laws and in the prosecutions that have followed. At the Chicago trial there were no doubt injustices done, as there always are under like circumstances. The Government was dealing with an organization whose propagandists had over and over again proclaimed it to be a body defiant of the law and indifferent to current codes of morality; and its members were being tried, rightly or wrongly, quite as much "on general principles" as on specific counts. And so matters were

introduced into the record which had no business there; some of the convictions were probably unjustified, and the sentences were generally extreme.

Whether or not any convictions should have resulted from the evidence submitted cannot here be argued. One may find, in the letter written to President Wilson by Alexander Sidney Lanier, an attorney and onetime captain in the Military Intelligence Division of the General Staff of the Army, an argument that none of the convictions was justified, and that in particular the convictions of Charles Ashleigh, Leo Laukie and Vincent St. John were atrocious. His review of the case is entitled to the highest respect. One who differs with him, however, may find some significance in his statement that "prior to the trial I never heard of the organization except in so vague and indefinite a way that it created no impression of any kind whatever upon my mind." It must remain a question as to whether or not one so wholly unfamiliar with the subject could rightly have understood the meaning of much of the testimony given.

But the I. W. W. has apparently been tamed. In its convention of May, 1919, and again in May, 1921, it adopted fundamental and sweeping reforms. The measure of its sincerity is, however, a matter on which opinions will differ. Its disavowal of sabotage and violence is encouraging, but its denial of past advocacy of these gentle aids to the millennium must incline one to skepticism. The organization, according to its official declaration, "does not now and never has believed in or advocated either destruction or violence as a means of accomplishing industrial reform." The statement regarding the past is a brazen falsehood, known to be such by every person of even the most ordinary information who has followed its course or read its "literature."



Some reasons for the new policy are given: "First, because no principle was ever settled by such methods." True; but the lesson has been learned since 1912. The earlier position was that such methods were admirably adapted to the attainment of proletarian power. "Second, because industrial history has taught us that when strikers resort to violence and unlawful methods, all the resources of the Government are immediately arrayed against them, and they lose their cause." True again; but again a lesson recently and painfully acquired. The earlier position was that by these methods both the capitalists and the capitalist state could be intimidated. He is a person woefully ignorant of radical propaganda and controversy these last fifteen years who does not know how large a part was played by the I. W. W. argument for "intimidation." "Third, because such methods destroy the constructive impulse which it is the purpose of this organization to foster and develop in order that the workers may fit themselves to assume their place in the new society." Here also is transformation. The "constructive impulse," though here and there voiced in the older days, had no such emphasis as was given to its opposite, the destructive impulse. "You must tear down before you can build up," expressed the more common view of the time. Nothing was to be saved out of the wreck of capitalist institutions and capitalist morality. All was to go, and the I. W. W. was to begin all over again. For this declaration, however, there is evidence of sincerity; the 1921 convention, as has already been said, decided that the great need was for each member to learn the technique of the industry in which he was employed, and so the writing and publication of a number of informational handbooks was ordered.

The I. W. W. had an authorized delegate in attendance at the convention of the new Red Trade-Union International (a

trumpery organization formed by the Bolshevik chiefs in opposition to the Amsterdam Trade-Union International), which met in Moscow in the summer of 1921. After the return of this delegate, however, the General Executive Board declined affiliation with the new body. The grounds given were six: First, that the congress had condemned the policy and tactics of the I. W. W.; second, that the International is political in character, is dominated by politicians and is merely the Communist party under a thin disguise; third, that the International had threatened to "liquidate" all labor organizations everywhere that refused to accept its dictates; fourth, that it intended to destroy the I. W. W.; fifth, that the congress was not genuinely representative of the revolutionary labor movement, and sixth, that even if the I. W. W. were not inhibited by its constitution from affiliating with any political organization, it could not co-operate with such a body as the Communist Party of America.

In the fall of the same year a former general executive secretary of the I. W. W. attended, as a "fraternal delegate," the preliminary New York meeting called to form the so-called Workers' Party. His action, however, was repudiated by the local head of the I. W. W. as unauthorized, and the declaration was made that the organization could have nothing to do with a Communist political movement "dominated by a lot of cheap politicians who have never had any revolutionary experience." Whatever happens, the I. W. W. will travel its own path in its own way.



## PART THREE

WITH the passing of the I. W. W. from the leadership of the revolutionary forces, the banner went for a time to the Socialist party. It had swallowed Bolshevism entire, and it spoke the revolutionary phrase (though with qualifications as to meaning) at the top of its voice. But it had within its membership elements which were showing increased dissatisfaction. The epidemic of revolutionism which broke out at the time of the armistice swept the ranks of the Socialists, and there was a free-for-all race to the extreme Left. The most careful study of the "literature" of this time brings out no essential point of controversy except the demand for more extreme utterance.<sup>1</sup> The Socialist party had already stultified itself completely and had committed itself to every violation of democracy. But the extremists demanded more. By March, 1919, the situation had got to be serious. The Left-Wing section of New York had issued a manifesto in which the technique of the revolutionary phrase had been brought to new triumphs. A demand was being made for a national convention with the frankly expressed object of seizing the Socialist party, and the national secretary of the party had recommended that no convention be held. Mr. Louis C. Fraina, the leader of the Left-Wingers and editor of the *Revolutionary Age*, who later was formally accused by his erstwhile comrades of being an agent of the Department of Justice, was, with his

<sup>1</sup> My statement is somewhat sweeping. There was, of course, on the part of the revolutionaries, a fierce insistence on the omission of all "immediate demands" from the party platform. Your true revolutionist is always for the revolution and therefore scornful of anything less. This insistence, however, no matter how furiously made, is never taken with seriousness by an experienced person. It is a part of the revolutionary technique, and is usually, if not always, disingenuous. At the November, 1921, election in New York City, the Workers' League, which included former Left-Wingers in the Socialist party who had so loudly denounced all these alleged palliatives, asked for votes on a platform of "immediate demands."

colleagues, carrying on the cause for Moscow. The welkin was being assailed with thunderous recriminations. It appears that the party had become a "swamp," inhabited by "Centrists," "opportunists," "petty bourgeois pacifists," "Scheidemann Socialists," and all manner of unclean things. In the chaste and polished phrase of Mr. Alexander Stoklitsky (*Revolutionary Age*, April 5, 1919), "the atmosphere must be cleared from the stinking rotten corpse." They were all doing what they could to "clear the atmosphere."

The election for members of the National Executive Committee had shown the Left-Wingers in the majority, and a National Left-Wing conference (June 21-25) had debated the question of whether the militants should stay in and capture the party or at once organize another. The conference decided that capture was better than secession. The Left-Wing Council thought otherwise, and for a time denounced the majority of the conferees. Controversy had now brought about three factions of Left-Wingers. Two of these, however, managed to coalesce by September 1.

The Socialist party, through its National Executive Committee, had met the emergency by unseating the Left-Wingers newly elected to that body, expelling half the party membership and calling a convention for August 30 in Chicago. When the convention met, a number of the Left-Wingers attempted to take possession of the hall. These intruders were ejected by the police, but the convention had hardly settled to its labors before those of the Left-Wing delegates who had been seated withdrew, and joining the rejected delegates outside the hall, founded the Communist Labor party. On the second day following, September 1, the Communist party was founded, composed mostly of expelled members of the Socialist party.



The Communist party, the backbone of which was the Slavic Federation, and therefore generally regarded at the time as in a special sense the representative of Moscow, produced, after much labor, a manifesto. It was in considerable part taken from the manifesto of the Third International, issued in Moscow the previous March. The phrases having to do with revolution were, however, softened into ambiguity. To the revolutionist they meant revolution; to other persons, what you will. Some selections follow:

"The Communist party, . . . is the conscious expression of the class struggle of the workers against capitalism. . . . The Communist party is fundamentally a party of action. It inspires the workers with a consciousness of their oppression, of the impossibility of improving their conditions under the wages system of capitalism. The Communist party directs the struggle of the proletariat against capitalism, developing fuller forms and purposes in the mass action of the revolution. . . . The Communist party shall keep in the foreground its consistent appeal for proletarian revolution, the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of a dictatorship of the proletariat. . . . Participation in parliamentary campaigns, which in the general struggle of the proletariat is of secondary importance, is for the purpose of revolutionary agitation and propaganda only. If the Communist party secures parliamentary representatives, they shall not introduce or support reform measures; their function is agitational. . . . The Communist party shall participate in mass strikes, not only to achieve the immediate purpose of the strike, but to develop the revolutionary implications and action of the mass strike."

Though obviously lacking in fire, these are good revolutionary phrases, the last phrase in particular. No one acquainted with revolutionary terms or with the psychology of the extremists can for a moment mistake the meaning. It is

physical force, armed insurrection, war against the state. If to the initiate it had meant anything less than this it would have been unanimously rejected. The wording, however, takes account of the existence, on the one hand, of prosecutors, government agents, police and all that kind of thing, and on the other hand, of kindly disposed editors of highbrow journals of opinion. The stuff is physical force garbed in a protective covering; it makes provision against a day when it may have to be explained to the suspicious and the unfriendly.

The other seceding faction, the Communist Labor party, also issued a manifesto. They all do. Here also were phrases of the approved type, though with a more skillful covering. Sadly enough, there was small opportunity of translating any of these phrases into action. The police and the Department of Justice, both deplorably lacking in a sense of humor, kept the two revolutionary bodies on the move, and neither of them was able to direct the revolutionary struggle or develop the implications of the mass strike or do any other of the grandiose things it had promised itself and the world. In the following May (1920) at a secret meeting held by delegates under assumed names "somewhere between the Atlantic and the Pacific, between the Gulf and the Great Lakes," according to their official account, there was a fusion of the more reconcilable elements of the two parties (the Slavic Federation being left out) under the name of the United Communist party; and in November came the momentous news that this party had received the benediction of Moscow.

There had been stout contenders for the prize of Muscovite recognition. The old Socialist Labor party had fought hard for it; and long letters, written by its national secretary, elaborately explaining American conditions, had been sent to Lenin. Moreover, the party had a seeming advantage in the



presence of a member, Boris Reinstein, near the throne at Moscow. The Socialist party, too, if certain mild reservations regarding methods had been acceptable to Moscow, would gladly and proudly have taken the distinction to itself. But the Socialist party, in the judgment of the Third International's executive committee, was compromising, timid, reactionary, afflicted with the "yellows," composed of petty bourgeois, social patriots, social pacifists, opportunists and such like reprehensible creatures; while the Socialist Labor party, for all its expenditure of heroic phrase, and despite the presence of its legate, failed to "make the grade." One would naturally have expected it to win; for it was Reinstein who brought the writings of the late Daniel De Leon to the attention of Lenin and drew from him high tribute to the departed leader of the S. L. P. But Reinstein must have recanted, or backslid or something; for afterward hard words were said against him in *The People*, the organ of the S. L. P., and the rueful acknowledgment was made that it was better to have no legate than an unfaithful or an incompetent one. At any rate the honor went elsewhere—and to a then unknown.

#### PART FOUR

LATE in 1919 the Department of Justice had given a formal opinion that according to the Federal statute of Oct. 16, 1918, membership in either of these parties was illegal. The Department of Labor, which was charged with the enforcement of the law, confirmed (January 24, 1920) this opinion in so far as the Communist party was concerned, but rejected it (May 5) in the case of the Communist Labor party. In the meantime

(January 2) the Department of Justice, acting under its own interpretation, had made a series of raids throughout the country, arresting many hundreds of members of both parties.

It was on June 23 of the same year that Judge George W. Anderson, of the Federal District Court, sitting in Boston, rendered his 35,000-word decision in the habeas corpus proceeding of twenty-five alien members of the Communist party, who had been arrested in the January raids and held for deportation. The decision severely scored the Department of Justice, asserting that it had employed spies and *agents provocateurs* who had very likely assisted in framing the language of the Communist declarations; that in the conduct of the raids it had flagrantly violated the law; that the prisoners had been treated with shameful brutality, and that nothing in the turgid language of the declarations of the Communist party indicated the advocacy of any kind of force more extreme than that necessarily involved in a general strike. Pending a review of this decision by a higher court, the prisoners were ordered released.

From all the insurgent elements all over the country came a shout of acclamation. The Socialist, radical, Left-Liberal, and all other sections of the insurgent press hailed the decision as epoch-making. "It will stand out," said *The New Republic* (July 14), with the painful fatuity which marks so many of that journal's oracular judgments, "as one of the permanent landmarks in the history of human freedom." There were nearly two pages of eulogium and exposition. "It is so thorough and restrained a discussion of such fundamental issues," wrote Mr. Lewis S. Gannett, an associate editor of *The Nation*, in a two-page article in that periodical (July 3), "that it is certain to become a historic document." There were



others. For instance, there was *The Survey*. Mr. Sidney Howard gave a page and more to the subject in the issue of July 3. He, also, thought the decision a remarkable document. Judge Anderson had "hit directly at the fallacy of the panic," and Mr. Palmer had been discomfited. "It is evident," wrote Mr. Howard, "that the plans of that august one 'said to be' Attorney General have miscarried seriously. In the words of Judge Anderson's closing brief, 'There is no evidence that the Communist party is an organization advocating the overthrow of the Government of the United States by force and violence.'"

But the irony of events brought a swift and striking refutation. Let it be said first, that with all that part of the decision which denounced the Department of Justice for its flagrant violation of the law and for its brutal treatment of the prisoners, every lover of humanity, every defender of free institutions, must cordially agree. So, too, must he agree with the Judge's implication of what happens from the employment of *agents provocateurs*. So also must he approve the release of prisoners unlawfully arrested; the first moral duty of a state is to obey its own laws. But with that part of the decision which found only innocuous meanings in the revolutionary language submitted to the court no informed person can agree; and the interpretation had not been given to the world before its absurdity had been amply demonstrated by the revolutionists themselves. It is incredible that Judge Anderson could have known this; but, on the other hand, it is hardly credible that the editors of the highbrow insurgent journals could *not* have known it.

For it happens that in May, as has already been stated, perhaps a full month before the rendering of this decision, delegates from the non-Slavic part of the Communist party and

from the Communist Labor party met in secret session wherein they formed the United Communist party, and wherein furthermore they revised these innocuous phrases and shaped them nearer to the heart's desire, nearer to what the framers originally meant. It further happens that the official United Communist report of this gathering and the official text of the revised declaration were printed, under date of June 12, and that the document was then or shortly thereafter in circulation. If any kindly judge or sophisticated editor had before been in doubt as to what these phrases meant, here was illumination provided for him. "The United Communist party makes no pretense of legality," read its manifesto. . . . "The program of the United party is, what it should be, a bold challenge to the whole capitalist system and a declaration of revolutionary purpose, without reservation or compromise." Mass action was at once to move forward to the "revolutionary implications" suggested in the earlier proclamation. The capitalist state, it was argued, would attempt to stamp out sedition; and therefore "the working-class must then answer force with force," and carry forward the class struggle as it "develops into open conflict, civil war."

Despite Secretary of Labor Wilson's decision as to the Communist Labor party and Judge Anderson's decision as to the Communist party, it was now publicly shown, within five weeks *after* the Wilson ruling, and eleven days *before* the Anderson ruling, that both parties meant the same thing, and that the thing meant was exactly what every informed person already knew it to be. But there was still another section to be heard from. That was the Communist party proper, composed largely of the Slavic Federation, and thus the particular beneficiaries of Judge Anderson's decision. One had not long to wait. In July this party also held a secret convention,



and it set itself to the task of clearing up a few matters about which there had apparently been some obscurity. It was angry and indignant at having been ignored, and it spoke plain words. It assailed the United Communist party as a band of "adventurers and charlatans," thieves (because of their having taken some \$7,000 from the party coffers), "unscrupulous phrase-jugglers," "Centrists," cowards, sentimentalists and several other things. The U. C. P. manifesto, it said, was a "typical Centrist document, lacking both clearness and understanding of Communism." Though its revolutionary phrases were conceded to be plentiful, they were denounced as insincere. "Phrases like 'civil war,' 'armed insurrection' and 'force' were mechanically inserted here and there, with no real intention of permitting such insertions to change the tone of the document."

The poltroonry of the United Communists was further shown by the fact that their manifesto reeked with the "bourgeois horror of the destruction of property and lives." Force, which to the real Communist is "an offensive measure for which Communists must consciously prepare, and which is the highest expression of the class struggle," the United Communists timidly regarded as merely a defensive measure. On the cardinal doctrine that the capitalist state is to be destroyed through "mass action culminating in armed insurrection and civil war" the United Communists were said to have given no word, nor on the inevitability of a proletarian dictatorship, nor on the immediate need of an underground organization. To crown all, the United Communists had sought friendship with that group of shameless bourgeois reactionaries, the I. W. W. The counterblast ended with this high summons to the faithful: "The Communist International calls: Arms against arms. Force against force. Workers of the

world, unite! All power to the workers!"

It sounds something like Ancient Pistol:

"Why, then, let grievous, ghastly, gaping wounds  
Untwine the Sisters Three! Come, Atropos, I say!"

But Pistol, though a swashbuckler and a roarer of fustian, was not incapable of mischief and harm. Occasionally he had to be kicked out of the tavern, or otherwise subdued.

#### PART FIVE

It was with brows freshly decorated with the laurel from Moscow that the leaders of the United Communist party, in the following winter (probably January, 1921) held their second secret conclave. Evidently complete secrecy had not been attained at the previous meeting; and so now a new technique was adopted. The number who met was 42, inclusive of all hands (with the possible exception of a reporter or two). It was a darkly, deeply, thrillingly secret conference—so much so that even the precise place of the meeting was (and perhaps is still) unknown to the conferees. And if one asks how that can be, the answer is that each was smuggled, perhaps blindfolded, by oath-bound guides, to and from the rendezvous. Furthermore, the conferees were nameless; they addressed one another by number. Probably they sang (though, of course, in muffled tones) the "International" and the "Red Flag." Anyhow, they unanimously, wholeheartedly and effusively indorsed the 21 points that Moscow had recently laid down, and sighed only that there were not twice or thrice as many for acceptance. They delivered themselves, too, of



much pent-up revolutionary phraseology. Strong emphasis was laid on the need of ridding the revolutionary ranks of semi-revolutionary features "inherited from the old Social Democratic opportunist parties; the need of pinning down to realistic tactics such elements as have taken flights of unreality, and the need of reaching such a common basis of action with revolutionary industrial unionism as will liquidate differences of understanding of the revolutionary struggle and ultimately shape the organized labor movement for its destined role in the overthrow of capitalism." They were proud, and justly so, of the delicate touch expressed in the phrase rebuking those who had taken "flights of unreality." It was a new and happy addition, somewhat out of the line of the ordinary stock phrases. Thereupon, smuggled back into the sunlight, each went his way satisfied with a good day's work, and a short time later another portentous document was filed in the archives of the Department of Justice.

The revolution was to happen almost any time. But the stars in their courses seemed to fight against it, and even Jupiter Pluvius stretched forth a restraining hand. Also, there were those pestilent creatures, the police. "The Communists," said Mr. Victor L. Berger at the Socialist convention in Detroit (1921), "issued circulars in Milwaukee last April advising the workers not to vote, because the revolution was coming May 1. And on May 1 it rained, so they postponed their revolution to May 6, and on May 6 a policeman arrested two of them for throwing handbills on the street in violation of a city ordinance, and the revolution has never taken place." But their hopes lived on, and their courage never faltered. Not always would it rain on May day, and the time would come when the brutal police would be taught not to interfere with the distribution of Communist handbills.

The thunders of controversy broke loose again in the spring of 1921. The Communists, harried by the minions of the Government, were keeping close to their kivas, but the small group of Left-Wingers still remaining in the Socialist party were trying to elect their delegates to the forthcoming convention, and they advertised the fact to the world. In the main they were unsuccessful. The Detroit convention decided that it could not accept the 21 points. For the Left-Wingers that was the end. In New York, on September 17, they staged another dramatic secession from the party. In a manifesto headed "Farewell to the S. P. An Appeal to the Remaining Members," and signing themselves "The Committee for the Third International," they let loose a torrent of revolutionary phraseology which must long remain the despair of competitors. Thereupon they joined with other revolutionaries in the formation of the Workers' Council, and this, after a series of mutations and changes of name, became, in January, 1922, the Workers' Party, the open and legal partner of the secret and "illegal" United Communist party. Its potentialities in the matter of directing the revolutionary struggle and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat may perhaps be indicated by its record at the polls. In November, 1921, the elements which subsequently formed this Workers' Party ran a ticket, under the name of the Workers' League, and with a platform which, with beautiful inconsistency, included a number of "immediate demands" and excluded most of the stock revolutionary phraseology. This ticket polled approximately 1,000 votes. Last fall the farce was repeated, and the vote fell close to zero.

In the meantime the non-political or "illegal" wing had staged another mummary. By last summer kivas and crypts had lost their novelty, and the secret conclave of the year was



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fixed for a spot among the arboreal dunes near Bridgeman, Mich. Of course the detectives and constables got there first. At the proper moment, on the morning of August 22, they emerged from their hiding places and gathered in seventeen of the revolutionaries, with great stacks of secret documents. The revolution had again to be postponed. Instead came a fresh wave of alarm which, spreading throughout the country, has given new justifications to the régime of capitalist reaction and has perhaps clothed it with added powers.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE HANGING LIST

#### PART ONE

NOT kindly, not charitable in the best sense, toward their dissenting brethren of other schools, is the temper of the fervent heralds of the New Day, the rapt devotees of universal brotherhood. Scornfully they look about them at the insufficiencies and derelictions of their fellow-revolutionists. The undesirables whom they fondly hope to see coming to just judgment are many, and grievous are their imputed sins. They need punitive treatment, these erring ones, not merely for their own good, but for the good of the cause. And so, consciously or subconsciously, the revolutionary mind sorts out and catalogues the most conspicuous offenders, confident that on the Great Day meet retribution will be visited upon them. Many are the schools, groups, factions of revolution; and therefore many must be the indexes of the iniquitous; and as some of these schools differ from others but by a hair's breadth of dogma or precept, there must be frequent and striking duplications in the enrolment.

For some day we are to have a social upheaval. They all tell us so—Socialist and Socialist Laborite, I. W. W., Communist, United Communist, Left-Liberal, Farmer Laborite and the rest of the deeply carminated brethren. Even the pinker shades comprised in the various groups of insurgency—radicals, pro-war and anti-war “Liberals of the Right,” fellowshippers of reconciliation and such like—though they



are less outspoken, give us dark hints of the wild hour coming on. Other folk might suppose that the enormous vote for conservatism in the election of 1920 would somewhat temper this expectation. But no. All that it proved, in the eyes of the far-seeing, is that the people had taken perhaps a last recourse to political action. If things don't mend—and how can they mend under the régime of the bourgeoisie?—the people will do the thing next time in a different way.

When the upheaval comes, some revolutionary party, faction, group or sect must of course seize the reins of power. It must then first provide for its own security. It cannot allow the mutterings of disaffection; for discontent, though a fine and noble thing under the sway of the bourgeoisie, becomes all at once, on the day of the revolution, a punishable crime. There must be no sowing of the seed of counter-revolution. Tolerance, freedom of speech, press and assemblage are all very well as slogans for a revolutionary minority aiming at power. But when power has been attained these things fade into mere "bourgeois ideologies," and the demand for their realization becomes treason to the revolution. Troublesome persons who still retain this vestigious ideal of a bourgeois society must be got out of the way.

Then, too, there are old scores to settle. The revolutionary parties, groups and factions have been engaged, some of them for years, in bitter fratricidal war and have nourished many and deep resentments. The victorious group must punish not merely for present offenses or for anticipated ones, but for past offenses as well. Treason to the revolution, treason to the working class, is the one unpardonable crime. To each fiery group all other groups are notoriously, brazenly guilty of this capital offense. And since under the bourgeois régime it cannot be punished except by wordy denunciation, in the days

of the revolution it must be brought to full reckoning, with stored-up vengeance.

## PART TWO

EACH revolutionary group fervently believes itself the chosen instrument of the revolution. To each of these groups the dictatorship of the proletariat means the domination of the rest of the community by itself. Whatever the tumultuous play of forces on the Great Day, however fierce and protracted the strife, it is one's own group that is seen emerging out of the welter into power. And with one's own group at the helm, it is upon oneself that the honor of high place—if not the highest—seems certain to fall. A marshal's baton was no more vivid an anticipation to a soldier of Napoleon's than is a commissar's badge to a revolutionary private or Lenin's sceptre to a revolutionary leader.

But not even the most enraptured zealot sees this attainment of power as an easy triumph. Power must be won by audacity, by resoluteness, by strife, and once gained it must be held by force. No thorough-going revolutionist deludes himself with the thought that peace follows victory. There must always be kept in mind the nefarious forces of counter-revolution, tirelessly striving to undo what has been done. These forces include not merely the unreconciled bourgeoisie, eager to regain their expropriated possessions, but far worse and far more to be dreaded, the zealots of other schools, disgruntled with the new régime and willing to make common cause with the bourgeoisie to bring about a new shuffle and a new deal. Even in these pre-revolutionary days are they not constantly



sinning against the light? And what else is to be expected of them when comes the great test? Can the zebra at will change his stripes for patterns in arabesque?

It is these whose names will decorate the hanging lists on the Great Day and the days thereafter; and it is such as these—the present-day suspects of rival schools—whose names decorate the anticipatory lists of the revolutionary fraternity while yet bourgeois democracy flourishes about us like a green cottonwood. Few, if any, of the great bourgeois offenders will be found numbered on the punitive bead-rolls either of today or of the Great Tomorrow. Objects of execration though they be, not for the profiteer, the rent-gouger and their like is the honor of the hanging list. In good time they can be dealt with; their possessions can be taken, they can be put to work on the roads or locked up on a diet of bread and water. If, however, they choose to be good and are disposed to accept the régime, they may even be forgiven, as in Soviet Russia, and advanced to responsible posts. But no such molycoddling indulgence falls to the lot of the preacher of false doctrine, the misleader of the working class. On him descends the undiminished force of revolutionary retribution. Today, as it will be tomorrow, he is numbered with the damned; and what Anticipation fondly promises him Realization will sternly provide.

If to the curious seeker of recondite knowledge these various anticipatory lists could be revealed, it is likely that they would show many similarities. Certain names might be found to appear on every list but one. Take, for instance, the conspicuous leaders (with one exception) of the Socialist party. They are not popular with the elements more extreme than themselves. Heaven knows they have tried hard to please, but the harder they have tried the less have their efforts availed. They have succeeded only in making these elements

their bitter foes and in drawing to themselves the designation of "traitors to the revolution." It is therefore fairly certain that on duly authenticated hanging lists of the I. W. W., the S. L. P., the United Communists and several other such groups the names of at least half a dozen of these leaders would be found to appear in virtually the same order of eminence. An I. W. W. hanging list compared with an S. L. P. hanging list would show striking contrasts and strong similarities. Each would give high, if not supreme, place to the leaders of the rival body, but except for this substitution they might be identical.

### PART THREE

NONE of these anticipatory lists furnishes so fascinating a field for speculation as that of the Socialist Labor party. For here is the oldest existing Socialist political organization in America, with a homogeneous membership that sets purity of doctrine above all things, and which holds to its doctrines with an unmatched fanaticism. In its forty-four years of existence this faction has kept up a bitter strife with other radical organizations, both industrial and political, and has accumulated a quite unparalleled stock of antagonisms and resentments. Outside itself, it maintains, there is no salvation. The S. L. P. is the rock of revolution; and here, when all other refuge fails, the bewildered and beaten hosts of labor will rally for the grand counter-attack which will gain the final victory. And why not? Granted the revolution, why may not this group, rather than another, seize the supreme power? True, it is insignificant in numbers, and by its iron rigor it



has driven thousands from its fold and made of them lasting enemies. But what has been in other days its notorious defect might conceivably, in the days of the great upheaval, prove its crowning virtue and advantage. Surely if, on that day, the upheaving mass searches among all the contending groups for unwavering singleness of aim and fanatical certitude of method, then here will be the body around which to rally. Perhaps the mass will do just that thing. Perhaps the S. L. P. will attain supreme power.

And therefore it is profitable to speculate on the matter of proscriptions. Certain it is that a great many persons will most expeditiously have to seek tall timber. The S. L. P. resentments are fierce and abiding. There will be no leniency. The proscribed will get all that is fitting to the offense and something additional as an example to others. High up on its lists will be the leaders of the Socialist party. There are years of stored-up bitterness for certain persons to expiate. They know it, and they will probably have made frantic though futile efforts to escape. Next are the leaders of the I. W. W., familiarly designated as the "Bummery." Here is further accumulation of wrath to be visited upon certain heads. They also will know what is coming unless they can succeed in throwing a monkey-wrench into the machinery. There is an older quarrel, a long struggle with the leaders of the American Federation of Labor, the bitterness of which at various times has risen to great heights. If in recent times a lessening volume of anathema has been poured out upon the Federation leaders, this is only because competing groups have drawn so much upon themselves. No Federationist need delude himself with the hope of immunity. The old wounds rankle, and on the Great Day there will be appropriate expiation. The younger groups of revolutionists, such as Com-

munists (united, disunited and otherwise) and such like will not be forgotten. Rapidly they are piling up the score against themselves, and when the time comes they will know what is to happen.

How will the radical intelligentsia—the unassorted and undifferentiated revolutionists and near-revolutionists of the coteries—how will these ebullient souls fare on the Great Day? Well, if they want the considerate and humane (though not over-friendly) hint of one who has spent many years in studying S. L. P. psychology, they will one and all take the first airplane for the nearest frontier. For, after all, though sectarian hatred prompts the proscription of the leaders of rival schools, it is a hatred that may possibly be blended with a certain respect. Though the Onondaga burnt the captive Huron at the stake, he honored the victim as a warrior. But the parlor radical awakens in the bosom of the Socialist Laborite no such feeling. Derisive contempt is the more common reaction, mingled with a strong desire to try out upon him some unusual mode of making him wiggle and squirm. The parlor radical has no friends in the membership of the S. L. P. He has ignored that body; he has taken up with Anarchism, Bolshevism, Syndicalism, I. W. W.-ism, or whatever other exciting thing has come along. The S. L. P. has had for him no dramatic appeal, no emotional stimulus. It has demanded of its followers discipline—and what free soul could endure the compulsion to believe anything very hard or very long? Coterie radicalism and S. L. P.-ism have nothing in common. The former is to the latter a mere plaything of the bourgeoisie. There is thus a long-standing account to settle on the Great Day; and these gay troubadours of the revolution, if they are not too fatuous, will evade the settlement by slipping below the horizon.



Of such, then, in outline, is the anticipatory hanging list of one of the divisions in the great revolutionary army. Relatively, it is a rigid list, for the principles on which it is based are fixed, and the S. L. P. professes never to stretch or alter its principles. On the Great Day the program would be carried out. There would be no amendment by coalition—no pooling of proscriptions, as with the triumvirate of Octavius, Anthony and Lepidus, wherein one element yields up a few of its friends in order to obtain the sentencing of its enemies. This S. L. P. will make alliance with no “impure organization, and all organizations other than itself and its auxiliary bodies are “impure.” It will do the thing itself or not at all.

## PART FOUR

Of course, after all, the great event may never happen. We may go right along pretty much as now, occasionally jailing a too exuberant advocate of general hanging day and patching up things as we proceed. But to the minds of so many imaginative and zealous beings this glorious consummation has been vivid and real; to so many souls it has been a source of uplift, of inspiration, comfort, peace and joy, that it deserves some mention in the records of the time.

## CHAPTER V

## THE SUPER-RADICALS

## PART ONE

THE Super-Radicals of the metropolitan parlors and studios are not necessarily Reds. They may or may not be Reds, as shifts the individual mood. The prefix *super* in its present application carries all the heritage of its Latin origin; it means over and above and extra, as well as beyond. Super-Radicalism is not Socialism, nor Communism, nor Anarchism, nor any other specific “ism” that can be expressed in a code. It is any one of these “isms,” or any blend of them, *plus*. It is the something else, the just beyond. It is, to alter slightly an old line, “the little more and what worlds away.” It dwells in a paradise of its own, where no rules govern; where to be fulfills its natural desire; where no troubling hobgoblin of foolish consistency is ever permitted to show its face.<sup>1</sup>

This transcendent kind of social extremism sprang into being in the early part of 1912. It was the direct result of the strike of woollen operatives at Lawrence, Mass. Of course there had been Super-Radicalism before then—many varieties, with many manifestations. But it had not penetrated, except incidentally, the parlors, studios, tea-rooms and col-

<sup>1</sup> Mr. John Spargo, in his book, “The Psychology of Bolshevism,” has done excellent work in analyzing the causative factors of this phenomenon. Doubtless he will agree with me, however, that many of the factors elude analysis and definition. The best that any of us who have carefully studied the phenomenon can do in the matter is to set down certain data, leaving to another time, when social psychology shall have become a more exact science, the full and true explanation.



leges. Of course, also, there had been strikes before then; moreover, many of these strikes had been attended by circumstances quite as sensational and dramatic as any which attended the upheaval at Lawrence. And yet no previous labor struggle had aroused in these circles other than a languid interest.

With the Lawrence strike came an instant burgeoning and blossoming of Super-Radicalism. Those who before then had been only timid and cautious; those who had merely hung about the fringes of the radical movement, taking now and then fearful but ecstatic peeps at something fascinating in its strangeness, but seemingly too dangerous for close approach, of a sudden were seized with the fever of revolutionism. Why the transformation happened, how it then and there came to be, no one can say. Perhaps it was the result of a long series of Freudian repressions, perhaps of a DeVriesian mutation. Anyhow, there it was—a phenomenon to the study of which some future social psychologist may give months of study. Many who had regarded Anarchism as chaos, I. W. W.-ism as a thing of terror, Socialism as an elaborate scheme of repression and plunder, and even trade-unionism as an exceedingly dubious interference with the *status quo*, all at once began to voice the patter of one-big-unionism, “direct” action and sabotage. Those on whom the fever fell showed various symptoms. Though as a rule conservative became radical, and radical became extremist, often it happened that the timid onlooker took all stages in a single leap, and from the farthest ground of extremism turned to mock the bourgeois moderation of those whom the day before he had looked upon as radicals beyond the pale of recognition. Like the outbreak following the armistice, six and a half years later, it was an emotional epidemic.

There was nothing in the Lawrence strike which rationally could have been expected to give rise to such a phenomenon. That strike began as a spontaneous walk-out of underpaid and overworked foreign-born wage-earners; and not until several days after these wage-earners had left their machines was the management of the strike taken over by the extremists of the I. W. W. and some of their parlor auxiliaries. But to the excited imaginations of the newly converted the strike was a world-shaking event. It was the beginning of the great revolution; it was an irrefutable proof of the solidarity of labor and of the superiority of “direct” action over the “indirect” action of political endeavor; and finally, it was an authentic presage of the overthrow of the capitalist system. How trippingly these phrases fell from the lips of the ardent neophytes of revolutionism who a week earlier would not even have understood their meaning!

But, as a demonstration of the power of labor, the strike failed. It was a lost battle when its “direct”-action managers, suppressing their scorn of political action, appealed to Washington. At the instance of Representative Victor L. Berger, Congress intervened; a hearing was held; after some delay a settlement was made, and the strikers returned to work. But, despite all the talk about revolution, there was nothing revolutionary in the terms of settlement, nor even in the leaders’ demands. These leaders professed to despise the ballot and all the machinery of government; they were wont to declare that all political action is necessarily compromising and reactionary, while all so-called “direct” action is, if not immediately revolutionary, at least potentially so. One might reasonably have expected from them the demand for the payment to each worker of the “full value of his product”; the surrender by the woollen companies of all right and title to their properties;



the division among the operatives of all the accumulated surplus, and the sentencing to the rockpile for six months, twice a year, indefinitely, of the presidents and directors of the companies. The leaders made no such demands. They asked merely for a moderate scale of increased wages; and an increase, ranging from 5 per cent for the best-paid workers, to 21 per cent for the poorest paid, with an average of about 15 per cent, was granted. Meekly and thankfully the leaders accepted the offer; and all the clamor about the "dictatorship of the proletariat" and the "overthrow of the state" ended in a compromise by which the worker who had received \$7.18 a week now received \$8.26. Never had an industrial campaign so boastful and pretentious ended in so pitiful an anti-climax.

## PART TWO

BUT the lesson, whatever it might be, was lost on both the activists of the I. W. W. and on their associates of the coterie. For months thereafter, until all interest in the episode had been swallowed up in the swirl and rush of new activities, the victory was exultantly acclaimed. The meagreness of the benefits won, as well as the fact that only Congressional intervention made even a partial victory possible, was ignored, and the result was blazoned as a proof of the irresistible might of the "revolutionary spirit" manifesting itself through "direct" action. Coterie radicalism, which had begun as an epidemic, now became a developed cult, with the prompting to a perpetual hunt for fresh emotional adventures.

Between the summer of 1912 and the spring of 1916 it busied itself with a great number of heterogeneous causes.

Nothing was too fantastic or too trivial for the whole-hearted devotion of at least some of its elements, the partial devotion of most of the remainder. Conceivably it might, had there been no war, have spent itself in diffusion. Its unity, its first, fine, careless rapture, had gone with the ending of the Lawrence strike; and no other strike, and, indeed, no other domestic happening short of a general overturn of society, could have restored it to spiritual wholeness. But the war came to Europe; by the spring of 1916 responsible public opinion in America had come to see the necessity of intervention; and in the counter-movements of anti-preparedness and militant pacifism, saturated with partisanship for the German cause, Super-Radicalism found reintegration and an accession of new elements. With actual intervention by the Government, the movement became for a time more vociferous and defiant, until neighborhood pressure and the law combined to suppress its more violent devotees and to induce in the others some semblance of caution; whereupon, changing its tack, it drew itself together again with the reiterant demand upon the Allied Governments for declarations, and ever new declarations, of their war aims. With November, 1917, came the seizure of political power in Russia by Lenin and Trotzky, and Super-Radicalism found its deepest interest and the point of concentration for all its strangely divergent elements. Bolshevism was the cause supreme. In fitting a social cause to a collective state of mind the force of nature could no further go.

Bolshevism, with the multiplicity of its appeal, easily overshadows all other causes. Big, wild and incomprehensible, misted with the glamor of the remote, it is the haven of imaginative adventure for restless souls at outs with their environment. Though it is the utter negation of some part or all of what they professedly believe and strive for, it yet draws to its



frantic support the most heterogeneous elements. Anarchists who reject all law, pacifists who declaim against the use of armed force, Socialists who inveigh against the conscription of labor; Single-Taxers (some of them) who oppose the nationalization of capital, democrats who demand representative government and a universal franchise—from all camps are assembled the eager acclaimers of this social monstrosity. They are, and in a sense rightly, unconscious of any inconsistency; since having, for themselves, abolished consistency, they are always, with themselves, consistent.

### PART THREE

FREE and untrammelled souls are the Super-Radicals—scorners of conformity and restraint, devotees of difference. In the mass they might well be termed the addicts of *alterity*. It is a good word, that last one, framed by no less a person than Coleridge, to represent the "state or quality of being different." Coleridge could obviously never have seen a Super-Radical and probably could not, even under the spell of poppy or mandragora, have imagined one; and yet his term, coined for a somewhat different entity, fits aptly the super-souls of the metropolitan areas. Difference is the badge of all their tribe, and the will to be different their guiding motive. Indoor and out, they pursue the unusual and the remote; they fly the obvious; they reject the existent and the established for the unformed and the imagined. Neo-Nihilists they might be termed: for, like the Nihilists of old, they are satisfied with nothing. Whatever the thing that is, it is some other thing that they want; and if that other thing is attained, it is in

turn rejected. One and all, they are devotees at the shrine of the great god Something Else. When something more thrilling comes along, they will desert even Bolshevism.

Yet different as they strive to be—different from the bourgeoisie and different from one another—how much they reveal in common! In susceptibility to every fresh contagion of unrest they are almost of one blood. In most of them is the passion to be persuaded or convinced first, and to understand why—if at all—later. In all of them is the primitive adoration of power. It is not intellectual or moral power that is the object of this idolatry, but the physical power which actually or supposedly can subdue and compel. That they are fierce declaimers against such exercises of powers as threaten themselves is nothing to the point. Of power in itself they are idolators. True enough, what they regard as power is often but a shabby counterfeit. But the fact proves only the devotees' dim sense of reality. The worship is ardent, even though the fetish set up is sometimes but a ridiculous make-believe.

Where else than among these rhapsodists of change does one hear so much of the *phraseology* of power? They did not, of course, invent this phraseology; they are not its sole users; and for the constant development of its technique they must turn to the Reds. But no others so eagerly adopt it, so fervently speak it and find in its utterance such wonder-working magic. It is, to them, at once poetry and ritual. They think in symbols of force; they clamor for the "dictatorship of the proletariat" (meaning the dictatorship of some Lenin or Kun), they magniloquently devote themselves to the "overthrow of the system," the "expropriation of the bourgeoisie," the "conquest of the state," and, in Lenin's phrase, the "crushing out of opposition"; and they thrill with pride at the



thought of participation in an event which imposes a rule of force on the unwilling. No military caste so habitually employs the thought and speech of physical compulsion.

The thing worshipped as the embodiment of power may be personal. It may be the latest apostle from the west, with a gospel of one-big-unionism and dynamite. The Roaring Bills and the Big Jims from the hinterland always find in the coteries the most eager listeners to their tales of daring-do and their dark hints of devious things yet to be done. Or the thing may be military, as the German war machine in the days when it was hammering its way toward Paris and the Channel ports. Professedly they are anti-militarists, these emancipated ones; pacifists, too, and decriers of force; and yet many of them were swept by an exultant thrill at the spectacle of this tremendous exercise of might. Out of their own futility and weakness they paid awesome tribute to what seemed to them irresistible power.

Or the thing worshipped may be political, as the Lenin-Trotsky régime in Russia. Professedly these emancipated ones are democrats, clamorous for self-determination and freedom of speech and of press and of assemblage. And yet every violation of every one of their professed principles by the usurping régime has served only to draw from them acclamations of delight. There are "some of us," ecstatically warbles one of the associate editors of *The Nation*, in a contribution to a Communist periodical, "who feel that we have found our holy city in the red streets of Moscow."<sup>1</sup> To *feel*, in such a matter, is less than to *know*; an utter and a fervent certitude is lacking only because upon this dream-city, this Xanadu of the revolutionaries, still rests some lightsome blot or shadowy defect. What it may be is not told, though doubtless it can be guessed.

<sup>1</sup> *The Liberator*, April, 1919, p. 43.

The violent and ruthless régime which calls forth this tribute—a régime marked by suppression, robbery, enforced starvation and wholesale executions—is something a shade less than holy *not* because it has done tyrannous and bestial things, but because in spite of them it has not conquered its opponents—it has failed as a demonstration of sheer power. Had it absolutely succeeded; had it "crushed out opposition," as Lenin declares a proletarian régime must do, no doubt there would have been full conviction of its holiness.

The thing worshipped as the embodiment of power must be a remote thing, whose compulsion can not come too near themselves. Or if near at hand, it must be no more than a realized make-believe. It must be such as to furnish the ecstasy of danger without its reality. The thrills aroused by close proximity to the Roaring Bills, the Big Jims and other thrasonical swashbucklers and counterfeits of power are only such thrills as children, in their games, garner from pretended bears and imagined dragons. It is an intenser type of thrill which was awakened by a contemplation of the Ludendorff war machine or is now kept at its peak load by the thought of the Lenin political machine. Here is power—real, if not absolute—and too distant to disturb the sheltered and secure lives of the worshippers. Here the imagination is given free play, and the responsive ecstasy touches all depths and heights.

Mere ordinary beings may wonder that "free souls" can rejoice in the exercise of compulsion. They might rather expect in these emancipated ones a conviction like Shelley's, that power (of the irresponsible kind)

". . . like a desolating pestilence,  
Pollutes whate'er it touches,"

and that the only justification for the exercise of power is



the enforcement of justice and the promotion of well-being. They might expect this; but they do not know the radical super-souls, nor do they reflect that kind Nature, in her task of attempted compensation, endows the inept and the futile with glowing visions of conquest and supremacy.

## PART FOUR

BUT here also they are one in their indulgence of the passion for self-deception. The Super-Radicals have a perpetual rendezvous with delusion. No people so habitually gull themselves regarding their own goals and desires; their relation to their surroundings; the reality and import of what happens about them. For the moment they are clamorous partisans of Bolshevism. And yet if anything is certain in an uncertain world it is that no one of these ecstatic spirits would care to live under a Bolshevik régime. They are "free souls," while Bolshevism means a multitude of restraints. They believe in chatter and clamor—they believe, to paraphrase Macaulay, that the evils of loquacity (if there be any) are to be cured by *more* loquacity—while Bolshevism means the rigorous suppression of speech. They want for themselves full participation in all that is decided and done, while under Bolshevism a small clique arrogates to itself all power. Bolshevism is, in theory at least, the exaltation of the horny-handed, while they are only the fops and fribbles of revolution. Most of them have possessions and incomes with which they are loth to part, while Bolshevism professes a theory of equal distribution. They are sheltered by laws, customs, and all the institutions and traditions of an ordered society, while Bolshevism assures nothing but a

chronic insecurity of condition and a perpetual danger to life. Not one of these ebullient emotionalists would wish, if the test came, to make the exchange. To the imagination, to the entranced spirit on its winged adventure, Bolshevism may be a second Eden, whose capital is almost a "holy city of dreams"; but to the sober sense of reality the solid claims of a bourgeois republic are conclusive. The laudators of Bolshevik Russia prefer to stay in the United States. The fervor with which they laud Bolshevism is in direct ratio to the degree of consciousness they possess that the thing is unattainable in America.

As they hoax themselves with false ideas of their goals and desires, they further hoax themselves in the matter of their relation to their surroundings. Fatuous in always "mistaking their own emotions for public movements," they ascribe to their clamors and pronouncements and activities an importance which has small basis in reality. Though they, and particularly their leaders, speak as the arbiters of destiny, the chief destiny that awaits them is to be perpetually on the grotesque side of every question that comes up. The groups and associations which they form or with which they affiliate are of all bodies the least influential on public thought and the least effective in promoting change. It is for Labor, and in the name of Labor, that oftenest they profess to speak; and yet on the regularly organized labor movement they have made no impress. A negative influence on the mass of mankind they unquestionably have—that is, an influence opposite the direction of their professed aims; for usually their stageplay serves to drive back into timid reactionism those who might have been of at least some possible use in the work of social progress. Their propaganda is sown far and wide; but its affirmative influence is in most times inappreciable.



In normal times indeed there are few to give ear to them; it is only in times of stress and upheaval and confusion, when landmarks are down, when ordinary pathways are obliterated and when people momentarily forget what it has taken the race many thousands of years to learn, that they find audience. For their appeal is to the vagrant and fugitive and irresponsible in mankind—to the mood which tires of hearing Aristides called the Just, to the temper willing to try anything once, to the relaxed consciousness, to the holiday desire for jazz and tango in politics, industry and social organization. Well is it for mankind that in the main it carries a settled mood; that it faces the realities and holds them in mind; that though it welcomes change it rejects the counsels of the fitful and the unstable, and that its vagrant moods are infrequent; else there could be no social organization among the sons of men, but only chaos and black night.

These emancipated ones are equally adepts at self-deception regarding the reality and import of what happens and exists about them. The fervent acclamation which they gave to the Lawrence strike as Chapter I of the great revolution was no more extreme a misuse of their judgments than they hourly commit regarding a thousand other matters. They are the denouncers and excoriators of virtually all that is—all except the "revolutionary spirit," "direct" action, and incidentally, the indulgence of their own individual caprices. To many of them the test of values is a simple one: All morality, law and custom is bourgeois; all that is bourgeois is outworn and intolerable; and therefore all must go—not merely the things which a considerable section of the world seems willing to part with, but even the things which most of the world seems inclined to retain. "Family life is the last of the barbaric institutions to go," writes one of the high-priests of the cult

in the most accepted and authoritative of its organs; "and it remains because it is still too sacred to tell the truth about." Nothing much, it would appear, is to be salvaged from the smash. There must be no link with the past.

To one who accepts evolution this ascription to the bourgeoisie of responsibility for all existing customs and institutions may prove a bit puzzling. The bourgeoisie are only a recent development in society, whereas most of the restraints against which the radical super-soul so fiercely revolts have come down to us from remote antiquity. Nevertheless, reply the "revolutionaries," these banalities of custom and institution are here; the bourgeoisie are also here, and in power; and they must bear the responsibility, if not of creation, at least of upkeep and protection. All must go—institution and agent and all his works—and the decks must be swept clean for a new start.

#### PART FIVE

THAT there will be change, who can doubt? There are those of us who believe that it will be a thorough-going change, radically altering the economic relations of men. But of the coming change, whatever it is to be, these *faincant* though voluble souls are not to be the prompters. Nor is it likely that they will function even as its celebrants, and with shouting and the beating of tom-toms announce its arrival, as the mob in an African village announces a new birth; since the change, whatever it is to be, can not possibly be one that follows the course of their professed desires. It is a poor old world, this one we inhabit, with a multitude of evils and maladjustments;



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but its denizens, as a rule, show no inclination to plunge en masse into a chaos of contradictory purposes.

Rather, the function of the radical super-souls is to be the playfolk in the Great Pageant of social progress; to furnish the diversion; to amuse, though by turns they irritate, the planners and renovators, the delvers and builders of the world. They amuse by their plaintive clamor against the bourgeoisie; by their eternal fitfulness and their egregious vanity, their multitude of contrarities of purpose and profession. But sometimes a few of the more ardent spirits play beyond their rôles; they irritate and offend, and thereby draw down upon themselves from the rest of society a punitive correction. Otherwise they are all indulgently left in peace. The Great Pageant moves on, while they give themselves to their tireless quest for fresh emotions and new adventures.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE REJECTED ALTERNATIVE

#### PART ONE

THERE is an old adage to the effect that however painful it is to be sizzled in a frying pan, a leap into the fire is unlikely to furnish relief. To the collectivist who, though he has no love for bourgeois capitalism, yet clearly sees the evils of Bolshevik sovietism, the aptness of this adage is constantly borne home. He has small desire to exchange a system under which, for all its defects, he has definite guarantees, a wide range of opportunities and a certain freedom of action, for one under which he would have nothing but the memory of what he had lost.

Yet Bolshevism, or some variant of that political and ethical chaos, is the only alternative to capitalism that any of our domestic heralds of a new order now offer him. Though rival factions quarrel over the terms and conditions and still more over the manner in which the system is to be brought in and the agencies that are to be intrusted with the dictatorship, Bolshevism or near-Bolshevism is their common goal. True, the party Socialists profess to want something now for America different from Bolshevism. But their ardor for Bolshevism in Russia makes one suspicious that what they want for us here can differ little from what they want for the Russians. The recent criticisms and sharp reprobations of the Soviet Government have to do with means rather than ends, and they have been forced by the cruel obduracy of Moscow.



They indicate no fundamental change. And thus, since all radical roads lead to Bolshevism, more than ever before it becomes necessary for the open-minded collectivist seriously to compare the thing proposed with the thing that is. On the one hand is the system of capitalism as it obtains in the bourgeois republic of the United States. On the other hand is the set of conditions which prevails in Russia under the rule of Lenin and Trotzky and the proposals advanced by Bolsheviks and near-Bolsheviks in this country.

## PART TWO

IN the first place, capitalism promotes political democracy. No one has shown this fact more plainly than Karl Marx. The progress of political democracy has been greatest in the most highly developed capitalist countries. Capitalism allows for wide differences of opinion and constructs elaborate machinery for the protection of minorities and for the change of rulers as yesterday's minority becomes today's majority. Bolshevism, on the other hand, openly repudiates popular rule. There is nothing novel in the fact that an oligarchy, by whatever name it calls itself, adopts any means for maintaining its power. The novel thing—the complete break with the past—is found in the attitude toward democracy now held by most of the advocates of a new order. Formerly, with most of them, democracy was a cardinal article of faith. Now it is either disavowed and rejected, or disingenuously explained to mean something else than what they have heretofore held it to mean.

In the second place, capitalism permits its opponents to live

and move and have their being. Bolshevism, on the other hand, is largely occupied with putting its opponents out of the way. The main necessity of a proletarian revolution, says Lenin, is to crush out opposition, and the Bolsheviks and near-Bolsheviks sanction this course as one eminently wise and necessary for the protection of the régime. Under capitalism the antagonist of the government seeks the limelight. Under Bolshevism, unless he can buy immunity, he is more likely to seek an underground cell; and he would be equally self-effacing under the rule of any of the groups that are now clamoring for a proletarian dictatorship. This bourgeois republic draws the line at interference with the prosecution of a war and at plotting for a violent overthrow of the government; but outside of these self-preservative restrictions it allows its antagonists an almost unrestrained freedom of speech, press and assembly.

Of all contradictions in a contradictory world there can hardly be one more absurd than the sight and sound of voluble agitators giving themselves up to violent accusations against the government and in the same breath denouncing the government for its repression; in the same breath, moreover, while denouncing the minor repressions of a democratic republic, excusing and even extolling the major repressions of a usurping oligarchy in Russia. No very lively sense of reality can be predicated of such persons. They see—that is, those of them for whom the role is not a mere theatric pose—everything in a distorted perspective. They have fanned their emotions into fanaticism, and as fanatics they see and feel and speak.

In the third place, capitalism does not convict the individual offender by secret accusation, but by public trial according to long established forms. Neither Bolshevism nor



any of its sister creeds has any scruples about the means so long as it gets its man. Let it be granted that before our courts there is often found to be one law for the rich and one for the poor; it is certain that in Russia there is one law for the Bolshevik and another for the non-Bolshevik. Granted that in this country we sometimes have the outrageous frame-up of a Mooney trial; in Russia all trials are Mooney trials if only the accused is other than a defender of the régime; and so they would be in America under any revolutionary group that succeeded in forcing itself into power. The cynical apologies, now so common, for terrorism as a means of installing and maintaining the reign of brotherhood, benevolence and justice, leave no intelligent person a doubt that what has happened in Russia would be wrought out here on a larger scale and with a more ferocious intensity.

Let it be further granted that in this country we have outbreaks of lynch law. But in the first place, our lynch law is sporadic; it has not been developed into a system, as in Russia; and in the second place its most typical example—that of hanging or burning of a negro for rape—has nothing to do with the economic conflict and might conceivably as readily happen under Communism as under capitalism. Nothing that our revolutionists offer us in the matter of the administration of justice is likely to convince persons who use their minds. It is even to be said that these revolutionists do not convince themselves; for there is not a sane one among them who would not, as he reflects upon the animosities of the contending groups, a thousand times rather trust his chances before a tribunal to a capitalist judge than to a revolutionary judge from a rival faction.

## PART THREE

THESE are but three instances in a list of comparisons which any sincere and intelligent collectivist can indefinitely extend. Such a one has no need to forget or ignore what he has always regarded as the inherent defects and the attendant evils of capitalism. He has no need to surrender any part of his faith. He may believe as ardently as ever in the ultimate coming of the cooperative commonwealth. He has merely to compare, open-mindedly and point by point, the system under which he lives with that which now prevails in Russia and to test the comparison in the light of the utterances of the revolutionary proponents of a new order. He cannot but conclude that the part of wisdom is rather to bear those ills he has than fly to others that he knows too well.

Many of these ills, he will see, are remediable ills—amendable or eradicable even under the system which he believes creates them; and he can, in his devotion to the cause of humanity, far more profitably give himself to the common effort toward amelioration than to the countenancing of turbulent and anti-social revolutionism. He may grieve that a fusion of charlatanism, social Jesuitry and revolutionism has for the time despoiled him of his hopes and that the goal which a few years ago seemed so promising has been pushed back into a future more remote. Yet he cannot but see that this flamboyant and corybantic revolutionism is a transitory thing; that it has no roots in the great mass of the people; that it is almost unanimously rejected by labor, which has most to say in the matter; and he cannot but believe that in some future time the forces making for social progress will coalesce into a saner movement.

The capitalist order can assuredly draw no plaudits from



one who has seen and comprehended the vision of the cooperative commonwealth. But when set off in sharp contrast to the wretched alternative now proposed, it reveals at least an acceptable *modus vivendi*—a workable means of going on. At any rate it carries a franchise from the majority; it is responsive to criticism; and it maintains itself by a constant series of adjustments to human needs. Bolshevism and its sister creeds base themselves on a terroristic reaction which denies the most primal rights of human beings and asks no other franchise than the bayonet. The common sense of free men rejects the proposal.

## PART FOUR

Not until after this emotional epidemic has worn itself out, will it be possible to re-form and reorganize the social-minded elements which it has scattered and for the time disheartened. Even when it has passed it will have left a chain of evil effects long to continue. In most of the European countries, especially those nearest Russia, the recovery from this epidemic (for every nation had it in some degree) was rapid; and where it was most rapid the growth of the political labor movement has been greatest. Here the ailment yet lingers, and here there is still chaos. The immediate outcome is wholly unpredictable.

It was a sorry tale of human weakness and ignorance and mutual antagonism with which the Fury, in Shelley's drama, tortured the heart of the fettered Prometheus. Valid and true enough it may have been, as told in the circumstance and setting of the year 1819. But much has happened in a hundred and four years—the spread of democracy, the pervasion of

the ideal of social justice, bold experiments, alternations of progress and reaction. Mankind in its strivings has heaped up stores of experience, has developed new faculties and has molded a new environment. It is not true in the year 1923 that "the good want power but to weep barren tears"; or that (despite the clapperclaw of the highbrow insurgent press) the powerful are necessarily wanting in all virtue; or that "the wise want love," or that "those who love want wisdom." It is not such imputed ills and defects which thwart and baffle the movement for social justice. Retardation and defeat come not from without but from within. What now might justly be told the still-fettered Prometheus—and not in malice but in benevolence—is that in this very practical business of building a fairer world the most evil enemies are that inciter of hate and discord, the fanatic firebrand, and his motley company of fakir, playboy and adventurer. Could these be blotted out or pushed aside, unitedly would the movement go onward, with every promise of an enduring triumph.



## APPENDIX A



## THE TWENTY-ONE POINTS<sup>1</sup>

*(Adopted July, 1920)*

THE second congress of the Communist International adopts the following conditions for membership in the Communist International:

1. The entire propaganda and agitation must bear a genuinely Communistic character and agree with the program and the decisions of the Third International. All the press organs of the party must be managed by responsible Communists, who have proved their devotion to the cause of the proletariat. The dictatorship of the proletariat must not be talked about as if it were an ordinary formula learned by heart, but it must be propagated for in such a way as to make its necessity apparent to every plain worker, soldier and peasant through the facts of daily life, which must be systematically watched by our press and fully utilized from day to day.

The periodical and non-periodical press and all party publishing concerns must be under the complete control of the party management, regardless of the fact of the party as a whole being at that moment legal or illegal. It is inadmissible for the publishing concerns to abuse their autonomy and to follow a policy which does not entirely correspond to the party's policy.

In the columns of the press, at public meetings, in trade unions, in co-operatives, and all other places where the supporters of the Third International are admitted, it is neces-

<sup>1</sup> There are two English translations current (both of them obviously bad) of this famous document.



sary systematically and unmercifully to brand, not only the bourgeoisie, but also its accomplices, the reformers of all types.

2. Every organization that wishes to affiliate with the Communist International must regularly and systematically remove the reformist and "centrist" elements from all the more or less important posts in the labor movement (in party organizations, editorial offices, trade unions, parliamentary groups, co-operatives, and municipal administrations) and replace them with well-trying Communists, without taking offense at the fact that, especially in the beginning, the places of "experienced" opportunists will be filled by plain workers from the masses.

3. In nearly every country of Europe and America the class struggle is entering upon the phase of civil war. Under such circumstances the Communists can have no confidence in bourgeois legality. It is their duty to create everywhere a parallel illegal organization machine which at the decisive moment will be helpful to the party in fulfilling its duty to the revolution. In all countries where the Communists, because of a state of siege and because of exceptional laws directed against them, are unable to carry on their whole work legally, it is absolutely necessary to combine legal with illegal activities.

4. The duty of spreading Communist ideas includes the special obligation to carry on a vigorous and systematic propaganda in the army. Where this agitation is forbidden by laws of exception it is to be carried on illegally. Renunciation of such activities would be the same as treason to revolutionary duty and would be incompatible with membership in the Third International.

5. It is necessary to carry on a systematic and well-planned

agitation in the country districts. The working class cannot triumph unless its policy will have insured it the support of the country proletariat and at least a part of the poorer farmers, and the neutrality of part of the rest of the village population. The Communistic work in the country is gaining greatly in importance at the present time. It must principally be carried on with the help of the revolutionary Communist workers in the city and the country who have connections in the country. Renunciation of this work or its transfer to unreliable, semi-reformist hands is equal to renunciation of the proletarian revolution.

6. Every party that wishes to belong to the Third International is obligated to unmask not only open social patriotism, but also the dishonesty and hypocrisy of social pacifism, and systematically bring to the attention of the workers the fact that, without the revolutionary overthrow of capitalism, no kind of an international court of arbitration, no kind of an agreement regarding the limitation of armaments, no kind of a "democratic" renovation of the League of Nations, will be able to prevent fresh imperialistic wars.

7. The parties wishing to belong to the Communist International are obligated to proclaim a clean break with reformism and with the policy of the "center" and to propagate this break throughout the ranks of the entire party membership. Without this a logical Communist policy is impossible. The Communist International demands unconditionally and in the form of an ultimatum the execution of this break within a very brief period. The Communist International cannot reconcile itself to a condition that would allow notorious opportunists, such as are now represented by Turati, Kautsky, Hilferding, Hillquit, Longuet, Macdonald, Modigliani, et al., to have the right to be counted as members of the Third Interna-



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tional. That could only lead to the Third International resembling to a high degree the dead Second International.

8. In the matter of colonies and oppressed nations a particularly clean-cut stand by the parties is necessary in those countries whose bourgeoisie is in possession of colonies and oppresses other nations. Every party wishing to belong to the Communist International is obligated to unmask the tricks of its own imperialists in the colonies; to support every movement for freedom in the colonies, not only with words but with deeds; to demand the expulsion of its native imperialists from those colonies; to create in the hearts of the workers of its own country a genuine fraternal feeling for the working population of the colonies and for the oppressed nations, and to carry on a systematic agitation among the troops of its own country against all oppression of the colonial peoples.

9. Every party wishing to belong to the Communist International must systematically and persistently develop a Communist agitation within the trade unions, the workers' and shop councils, the co-operatives of consumption and other mass organizations of the workers. Within these organizations it is necessary to organize Communistic nuclei<sup>1</sup> which, through continuous and persistent work, are to win over the trade unions, etc., for the cause of Communism. These nuclei are obligated in their daily work everywhere to expose the treason of social patriots and the instability of the "center." The Communist nuclei must be completely under the control of the party as a whole.

10. Every party belonging to the Communist International is obligated to carry on a stubborn struggle against the Amsterdam International of the yellow trade unions. It must carry on a most emphatic propaganda among the workers or-

<sup>1</sup> In the other translation, "cells."

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ganized in trade unions for a break with the yellow Amsterdam International. With all its means it must support the rising International Association of the Red trade unions which affiliate with the Communist International.

11. Parties wishing to belong to the Third International are obligated to subject the personnel of the parliamentary groups to a revision, to cleanse these groups of all unreliable elements, and to make these groups subject to the party executives, not only in form but in fact, by demanding that each Communist member of parliament subordinate his entire activities to the interests of genuinely revolutionary propaganda and agitation.

12. The parties belonging to the Communist International must be built upon the principle of democratic centralization. In the present epoch of acute civil war the Communist party will be in a position to do its duty only if it is organized along extremely centralized lines, if it is controlled by iron discipline and if its party central body, supported by the confidence of the party membership, is fully equipped with power, authority and the most far-reaching faculties.

13. The Communist parties of those countries where the Communists carry on their work legally must from time to time institute cleansings (new registrations) of the personnel of their party organization in order to systematically rid the party of the petit bourgeois elements creeping into it.

14. Every party wishing to belong to the Communist International is obligated to offer unqualified support to every Soviet republic in its struggle against the counter-revolutionary forces. The Communist parties must carry on a clean-cut propaganda for the hindering of the transportation of munitions of war to the enemies of the Soviet Republic; and furthermore, they must use all means, legal or illegal, to carry propaganda,



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etc., among the troops sent to throttle the workers' republic.

15. Parties that have thus far still retained their old Social Democratic programs are now obligated to alter these programs within the shortest time possible and in accordance with the particular conditions of their countries, work out a new Communist program in the sense of the decisions of the Communist International. As a rule the program of every party belonging to the Communist International must be sanctioned by the regular congress of the Communist International, or by its executive committee. In case the program of any party is not sanctioned by the executive committee of the Communist International, the party concerned has the right to appeal to the congress of the Communist International.

16. All decisions of the congress of the Communist International, as well as the decisions of its executive committee, are binding upon all the parties belonging to the Communist International. The Communist International, which is working under conditions of the most acute civil war, must be constructed along much more centralized lines than was the case with the Second International. In this connection, of course, the Communist International and its executive committee must, in their entire activities, take into consideration the varied conditions under which the individual parties have to fight and labor, and adopt decisions of only general application regarding such questions as can be covered by such decisions.

17. In connection with this, all parties wishing to belong to the Communist International must change their names. Every party wishing to belong to the Communist International must bear the name: Communist party of such and such a country (section of the Third Communist International). The question of name is not only a formal matter, but is also to a high degree a political question of great importance. The Communist

## THE TWENTY-ONE POINTS 105

International has declared war upon the whole bourgeois world and all yellow Social Democratic parties. It is necessary to make clear to every plain workingman the difference between the Communist parties and the old official "Social Democratic" and "Socialist" parties that have betrayed the banner of the working class.

18. All the leading press organs of the parties of all countries are obligated to print all important official documents of the executive committee of the Communist International.

19. All parties that belong to the Communist International, or that have applied for admission to it, are obligated to call, as soon as possible, but at the latest not more than four months after the second congress of the Communist International, a special convention for the purpose of examining all these conditions. In this connection the central bodies must see to it that all the local organizations are made acquainted with the decisions of the second congress of the Communist International.

20. Those parties that have thus far wished to enter into the Third International, but have not radically changed their former tactics, must see to it that two-thirds of the members of their central committees and of all their important central bodies are comrades who unambiguously and publicly declared in favor of their parties' entry into the Third International before the second congress of the Communist International. Exceptions may be allowed with the approval of the executive committee of the Third International. The executive committee of the Communist International also has the right to make exceptions in the cases of the representatives of the "center" tendency named in paragraph 7.

21. Those party members who, on principle, reject the conditions and theses laid down by the Communist International



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are to be expelled from the party. The same thing applies especially to delegates to the special party convention.

APPENDIX B



## SELECTED REFERENCES

### COMMUNIST DECLARATIONS

THE first program and manifesto of the Communist Party of America was printed in full in *The Christian Science Monitor*, Sept. 11, 1919. It appears also in "The American Labor Year Book" for 1919-20 (p. 418). The two texts differ considerably. The latter is probably an edited transcript of the former.

The platform and program of the defunct Communist Labor party appears in "The American Labor Year Book" for 1919-20 (p. 415).

The first manifesto of the United Communist party, adopted during "the last of May or the first of June," 1920, was printed in an issue of *The Communist*, dated June 12 of that year, but giving no place of publication. Extracts from, and comment upon, this manifesto were given by H. W. L. [Harry W. Laidler] in *The Socialist Review* for August, 1920.

The manifesto of the Communist party, attacking the foregoing manifesto, was printed in August, 1920, in a fugitive periodical also named *The Communist*. Extracts from, and comment upon, this manifesto were printed by H. W. L. [Harry W. Laidler] in *The Socialist Review* for September, 1920.

An account of the second convention of the United Communist party, with some excerpts from a new declaration, taken from No. 13 of *The Communist*, printed without date or place of publication, appeared in *The Christian Science Monitor*, Feb. 2, 1921.

A document, signed by the central executive committee of



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the Communist Party of America, giving rules for the guidance of the underground work of the Communists, copies of which were seized by the police in the New York raids of April 30, 1921, was reprinted generally in the metropolitan press at the time. The text in full was given in *The New York Times*, May 1 of that year.

Copies of a similar document, though much more elaborate—the report of the “adjustment committee of the Communist party”—were seized in the Bridgeman (Mich.) raid of Aug. 22, 1922. The text was given in full in *The Boston Transcript*, Sept. 16.

The declaration of the executive committee of the Third International repudiating the Socialist Party of America and calling upon American revolutionists to join the United Communist party, appeared in No. 5 of *The Russian Press Review* (an official Bolshevik publication printed in English “either in Russia or on the border”) for October, 1920, and was reprinted in *The New York Call*, Nov. 30 following. The text is given in full in “The Social Interpretation of History,” by Maurice William (1921, p. 388).

For a brief but comprehensive treatment of official propaganda by the Soviet Government and the Third International, see the chapter “World Revolution” in “Out of Their Own Mouths,” by Sampel Gompers and William English Walling (1921). Further material may be found in Senate Document No. 172, 66th Congress, second session, “Bolshevist Movement in Russia.” Much of this propaganda has been reprinted scores of times in various articles and pamphlets. “A Letter to American Workingmen,” by Nikolai Lenin, dated Aug. 20, 1918, is printed in the Lusk Committee report, Vol. I (p. 657), and in “The Social Interpretation of History” (1921, p. 308). “A New Letter to the Workers of Europe and Ameri-

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ca,” by Nikolai Lenin, dated Jan. 21, 1919, is printed in the Lusk Committee report, Vol. I (p. 668).

### DEPORTATION CASES OF ALIEN COMMUNISTS

JUDGE ANDERSON’S decision (June 23, 1920) in the Boston hearing known as the “Colyer trial” is given in 265 Federal Court Reporter (p. 17). A detailed summary appeared in *The Monthly Labor Review* for October, 1920.

Articles on the hearing, by Sidney Howard, appeared in *The Survey*, April 17, May 1, May 15 and July 3, 1920. *The Survey* of April 24 of that year had an article by Francis Fisher Kane on “The Communist Deportations. Mr. Post’s Handling of the Cases as Acting Secretary of Labor.”

The decision of the Secretary of Labor, William B. Wilson (Jan. 24, 1920), that membership in the Communist party is illegal (deportation case of Englebrert Preis, an Austrian) appeared in many of the daily papers Jan. 25 and also in *The Monthly Labor Review* for March, 1920.

An abstract of the decision of Secretary Wilson in the Carl Miller case (May 6, 1920), declaring membership in the then Communist Labor party legal, appeared in *The Christian Science Monitor* of that date.

### THE I. W. W.

THE letter by Alexander Sidney Lanier to President Wilson appeared in *The New Republic*, April 19, 1919, and in *The Appeal to Reason*, May 3 following.

Articles on the changed policy of the I. W. W. appeared in *The Christian Science Monitor*, May 20 and 29, 1919, and Jan. 22, 25, Feb. 7 and March 19, 1921. An article on the



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same subject, by Art Shiels, appeared in *The Socialist Review* for April-May, 1921.

### THE SOCIALIST PARTY

THE various official declarations of the Socialist party up to 1917 regarding the war (including the St. Louis manifesto of April, 1914) may be found in the pamphlet, "The American Socialists and the War," published by the Rand School of Social Science (1917).

A great deal of matter on the controversy between the "Centrists" and the Left-Wingers (aside from that which appeared in the party organs such as *The Call*, *The Milwaukee Leader*, *The Oakland World* and others, may be found in the files of *The Socialist Review* from December, 1919, to April-May, 1921 (the last issue). The subject is briefly summarized in Harry W. Laidler's book, "Socialism in Thought and Action" (1920). The other side of the controversy appeared in the weekly organ, *The Revolutionary Age* (later *The Communist*), and in the monthly periodical, *The Liberator*.

### THE RED MENACE BEFORE NOVEMBER, 1920

PERIODICALS and newspapers were crowded during the two years 1919-20 with articles on the menace of Red propaganda and the need of preventive action. The "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature," Vol. V. (1919-21), gives more than 350 titles (though some of these are duplications) under various headings related to the general subject of revolutionism. My own collections are so voluminous that even an index of them would take up many pages of this book. Nothing more

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can be cited here than the titles of a few typical articles illustrative of the dread of this menace at that time:

"Foreign Language Press's Bolshevik Propaganda in U.S." *New York Times*, June 8, 1919.

"Fighting the Reds in Their Home Town." By Ole Hanson (four articles). *World's Work*, December, 1919-March, 1920.

"Radical Propaganda. How It Waxes." By Samuel Crowther. *World's Work*, April, 1920. (This article is especially well worth reading for its understanding of revolutionist psychology.)

"The Reds in America" (From the Standpoint of the Department of Justice.) By Arthur Wallace Dunn. *Review of Reviews*, February, 1920. In the same number is an article, "Radicalism Under Inquiry," by Clayton R. Lusk, chairman of the New York Legislative Committee which at the time was just concluding its investigation of seditious activities.

"Is Bolshevism in America Becoming a Real Peril? Extent of Our Social Unrest and Suggested Remedies." *Current Opinion*, July, 1919.

"Reds in New York Slums. How Insidious Doctrines Are Propagated in New York's East Side." By John Bruce Mitchell. *Forum*, April, 1919.